PRIVATE EYE

No. 865
Friday
10 Feb. '95

£1

MAJOR WAS HER TOYBOY

VALENTINE SPECIAL

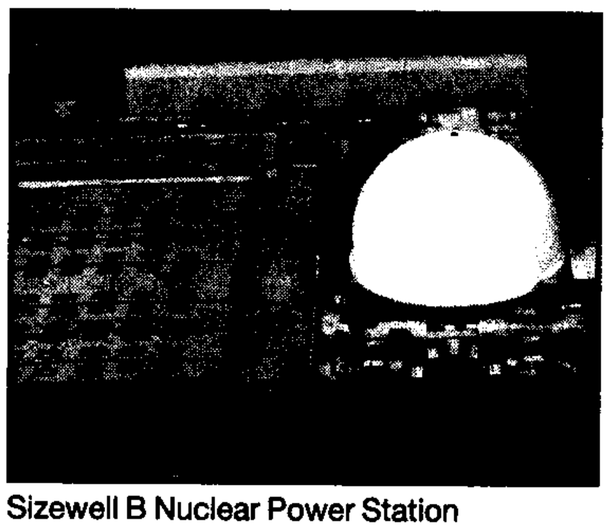
Pass Notes

No. 1957: The British Nuclear Industry

Age: 50

Appearance: prematurely aged white elephant

Occupation: providing over-priced electricity to an already over-supplied market, from potentially explosive reactors.



Sizewell B Nuclear Power Station

Is that why it wasn't privatised in '89? Not really. The reason that it failed in the market place in 1989 was the industry's enormous liabilities - literally acres of nuclear waste. A bill for almost £10 billion didn't make a lot of friends in the City.

No problem now though, eh? Lean mean business machine, and all that? In any case, surely money been put aside to clean up the mess? Well some, but what's the point of keeping money in the bank, when they need lots of money just to keep going? So, most of the money - over £1 billion per year - set aside for clapped out power stations and nuclear waste has been spent on a new power station, Sizewell B.

So the prospects are good for a lively future? Well it depends on who you ask: Nuclear Electric is so keen that it wants to be privatised right now.

Nice work, if you can get it. Unfortunately for the Nuclear Industry, not everybody looks at it the same way. The CBI said "on balance the CBI does not find the case for nuclear investment to ensure security of supply compelling."

What does that mean exactly? The UK needs a growing nuclear industry like a fish needs a bicycle.

What will privatising the nuclear industry achieve anyway? Errm... internationally competitive salaries, as well as bonuses, share options and other perks for highly sought-after top executives.

What else? It may just be the end of the nuclear industry. No private sector investor in their right mind would pour the necessary billions into new nuclear power stations.

But isn't the nuclear industry the real "Friend of the Earth"? Er no, actually. Not only do they create impossible-to-deal-with nuclear waste, weapons-capable plutonium, lethal radioactive discharges, and the threat of catastrophic accidents, they aren't needed to deal with global warming or acid rain. Cheaper and better options include energy efficiency, renewables and better use of fossil fuels, such as combined heat and power (CHP).

So what's the real problem? A growing pile of deadly rubbish that won't go away for, say, a million years. The problem is so big that John Gummer - Secretary of State for the Environment - wants to build a hole in the ground in Cumbria - the Nirex Repository - to get the problem out of his hair. Unfortunately the site that Nirex has picked - practically underneath the BNFL plant at Sellafield, coincidentally enough, and cleverly selected for its upward flowing groundwater and earthquake potential - is guaranteed to leak dangerous radioactivity to the environment. (In the meantime, the Government wants to put radioactive waste in a tip near you.)

By the way, who pays for all those nuclear ads? You do, sucker.

Most likely to say: "Sorry, we've irretrievably wasted lots of your money, but it's cheaper to carry on than stop now."

Least Likely To Say: "Well we've been going fifty years, I guess it's about time we stood on our own two feet".

With thanks to the Guardian

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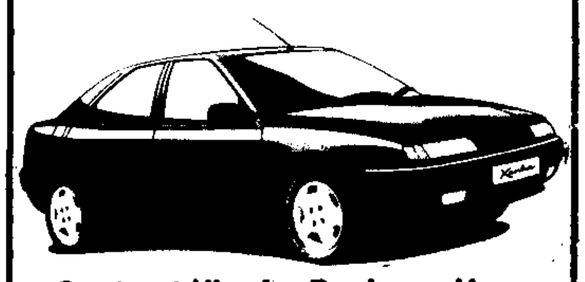

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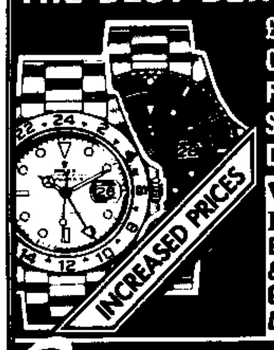

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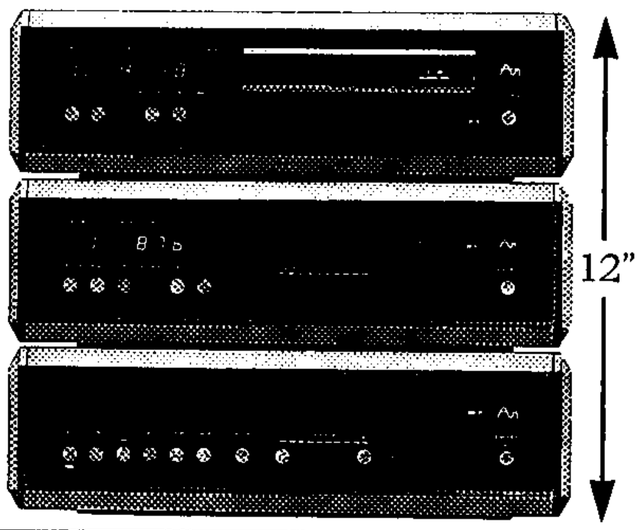

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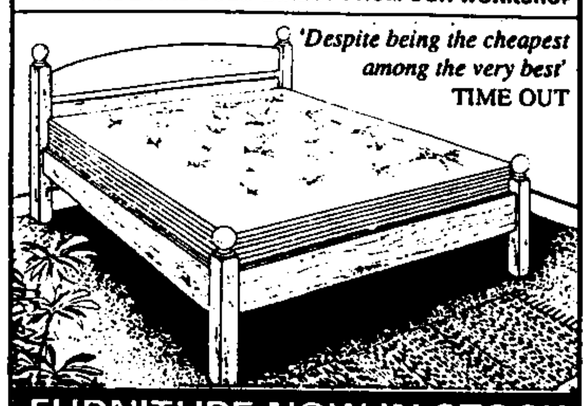

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ADMIRAL

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Gnome

I AM heartily sick of reading in the press about the so-called impropriety of my recent behaviour. As usual, a group of envious and politically motivated journalists has taken a set of unconnected events and leapt to the wrong conclusion.

The facts of the matter are simply these:

a) Whilst in government, as Secretary of State for Privatisation, I awarded all the available consultancy contracts to the merchant bankers, N.M. Rottershired.

b) On leaving office I coincidentally joined the board of one of Britain's leading merchant banks, N.M. Rottershired.

The malicious scribblers in the upmarket tabloids simply put two and two together and came up with five hundred thousand pounds for a three-day week.

This is quite intolerable, and I have decided to complain to the Press Complaints Commission. This body fortunately has a sensible chairman (myself) and I am confident that this will be the most serious case he has ever considered. You have all been warned.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
Wakeham-on-Everything
Great Sleaze
Berks.

SPECIAL EYE QUIZ

What do you think is the best use of £10 million of public money?

1. 1,667 heart bypass operations.
2. 2,500 hip replacements.
3. 3,000 premature babies to spend one week in hospital.
4. 8,334 general patients to spend one week in hospital.
5. 3,400,000 people to have courses of penicillin.
6. 10,000,000 people to receive malaria treatment.
7. Er...
8. 2 people (Ian and Kevin Maxwell) to receive Legal Aid for their trial.

Answers please to The £10 Million Question, c/o solicitors Peters & Peters and Kingsley Napley.

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IN THE TEAROOM

Northern Ireland has been on the agenda: not the merits or demerits of framework documents or cross-border institutions; but the politics of survival.

"I simply can't see what's in it for us," began the resident cynic. "Why should we play the musical accompaniment to the PM's swansong?"

"The whole initiative is just John's bid for a place in the history books," said a companion in a tone implying that any such ambition was wholly unseemly in a politician. Soon it was agreed that the whole Anglo-Irish peace initiative was not really a Tory policy, not even a government policy either: it was simply John Major's personal policy and therefore expendable.

But what should Mr James Molyneaux be told to stop him precipitating a general election?

Plan A: "We've got to make it clear to Jim that the PM has been hijacked by unsound civil servants in the Northern Ireland office..." Plan B: "...We can point out that the PM won't necessarily be around to see it through."

'Urquhart'

TOM KING, the former environment and defence secretary, is well qualified to sit on the Nolan commission into sleaze in public life.

According to the *Sunday Times* on 5 February he got his job as chairman of the London International Exhibition Centre on the recommendation of MP Andrew Mackay — the Tory whip, former property speculator and merchant banker (see *Eyes* 16 December and 27 January) who had worked for Tom King as parliamentary private secretary and knew of Tom's deep and abiding interest in earning a lot of money (*"in the construction industry", shurely?*)

The exhibition centre chairmanship was not the only new interest registered last year by King. He also bought a substantial new shareholding in Fosters Rooms, a catering company, one of whose other directors is his sister, Stella Clarke. Mrs Clarke was showered with public appointments during Tom King's ministerial career. In 1988 she became a member of the Housing Corporation; and in 1989 she joined the Bristol Development Corporation.

In Tom King, Nolan has just the right chap on his committee; and for a glimpse of how ruthlessly he exposes sleaze among his former ministerial colleagues, see Footnotes on page 26.

WILL Lord Nolan ask Andrew Hunter, MP for Basingstoke, for his expert views on parliamentary sleaze?

Andrew, once a Harrow schoolmaster, used to fly first class, all expenses paid, to Bophutatswana, South Africa's fantastically corrupt *apartheid* "Bantustan", up to half a dozen times a year. He was so dedicated he even once sent his wife Janet to represent him.

Meanwhile a chuckling Lord Walker, the Tory grandee, has been seen leaving the Ritz. He has plenty to laugh about. As plain Peter Walker the Welsh secretary his sole success was to convince bankers N.M. Rothschild's to set up a Welsh subsidiary. The bankers were so pleased with the venture that when Walker lost his ministerial job they made him a non-executive director. Lord Nolan might not have twigged this yet: Walker forgets to mention it in *Who's Who* alongside his other directorships — like British Gas, which he privatized!

But it is not just the Tories who have been defending the gravy train before Lord Nolan. Because of her job, Labour frontbencher Anne Taylor, shadow leader of the house, could not duck out of submitting evidence. She stoutly defended parliamentarians acting as paid lobbyists — a stance which had nothing to do with her past (highly-remunerated) directorship of lobby firm Westminster Communications.

WHEN Labour MP Dawn Primarolo visited the chief executive of the Bristol and West Building Society she was surprised to be greeted by the entire board.

First she was introduced to the chairman, Lord Armstrong, the former cabinet secretary who is best known for his "economical with the truth" comments during the *Spycatcher* saga.

Then to her amazement she was introduced to Lord Wakeham, a new board member who has just left the government and has wasted no time at all in joining the jobs-for-the-boys merry-go-round.

Quick as a flash Primarolo snapped at him: "How does this directorship compare with the other one at Rothschild's?" Sadly the noble lord was not best pleased with this ungracious intervention.

LABOUR MP Helen Liddell wrote a splendidly indignant piece in the *Scotsman* two weeks ago about rapacious business tycoons.

"The outdated 'gentlemen's agreements' that are Britain's excuse for a regulatory mechanism gave us the scandals of Polly Peck, BCCI and Robert Maxwell," she thundered. "Other nations look askance at our gullibility..."

She should know. In Cap'n Bob's final years he had no more devoted supporter than his chief henchwoman in Scotland. Her name? Helen Liddell.

● *More HP Sauce, page 8.*

Street of Shame

THE *Indescribablyboring* **was none too impressed by last week's** *Times* **scoop about Northern Ireland.**

"The author of the piece, Matthew D'Ancona, is not just a journalist but an activist," its editorial noted disapprovingly, "part of a small group of British Unionists who have always argued that the peace process was leading to the end of the union. In a recent pamphlet 'Ulster After The Ceasefire' he and others argued just this. So he had an axe to grind."

An odd criticism in view of the fact that many senior staff at the *Indie* are closely involved with Demos, the pamphleteering Blairite think-tank. What makes it even odder is that only last autumn the *Indie* was trying desperately to hire... Matthew D'Ancona.

"RICHARD LITTLEJOHN joins the *Mail***" yelled a headline across the top of page two of the** *Daily Mail* **last Thursday.**

In a glowing tribute to the famous gorblimey specialist, the paper described Littlejohn's "brilliant career that has spanned writing for the *Evening Standard*, *Punch* and the *Spectator*. Littlejohn, 41, has emerged as a thorn puncturing those in authority who seek refuge in humbug".

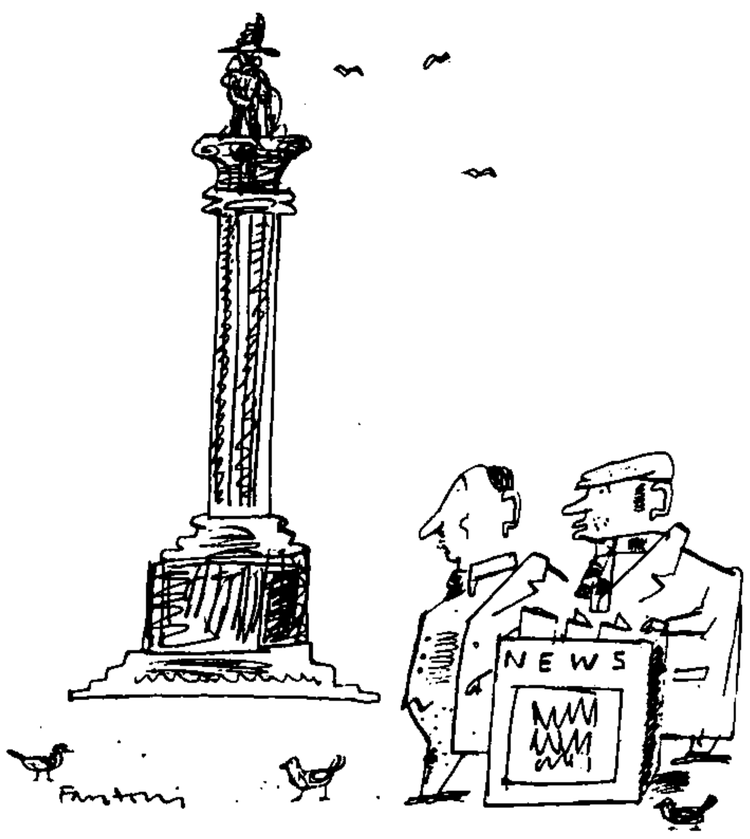
But the *Mail* itself is not averse to a bit of humbug. Its long review of his CV — including his radio phone-in, TV chat-show, etc — conspicuously failed to mention Littlejohn's greatest claim to fame: that for the past few years he has been the top columnist on the *Sun*.

Surely the *Mail* can't still be sulking over the *Sun*'s refusal to let him break his contract when Associated Newspapers first tried to poach him last year?

THERE was much guffawing in the supposedly secure offices of the *Sunday Times* **recently when several members of a group called the Lesbian Avengers invaded the newsroom.**

They were furious about a story about them that had appeared in the paper written by Maurice Chittenden, the chief reporter. "Where's Maurice Chittenden? We demand to see him," the lesbians insisted.

At this point Maurice Chittenden stood up at his desk and grabbed his coat. "I'll just go and see if I can find him," he said, before darting out of the door. The Avengers chained themselves to filing cabinets and stayed put for several hours until police arrived.



"Everyone's got a column these days"

THE fruitless campaign by Martin "Sweetie" Walker for the editorship of the *Guardian* **gave rise to one glorious moment that will live in the memories of** *Grauniad* **news hacks for ever.**

Deciding that he ought to "meet the people" Walker patrolled the editorial floor introducing himself to lowly hacks, sub-editors and obscure picture desk assistants.

He came to one ancient sub, noted for his grumpiness. "Hello, I'm Martin Walker," he said, extending his hand in friendship.

"Fuck off, you slimy git," exclaimed the sub, who carried on working, continuing to stare fixedly at his screen.

DAVID "Rommel" Montgomery, who as a former editor of the *News of the World* **is familiar with the "kiss 'n' tell" genre, must be dismayed to hear that his estranged wife Heidi Kingston has been shooting her mouth off about the Mirror Group during a trip to New York.**

In particular she has been describing how "Rommel" gave Ian Hargreaves, the editor of the *Indescribablyboring*, a ferocious dressing-down which concluded with the memorable exclamation: "It's amazing that you haven't consulted the two ex-editors on the group's board about your title's problems."

The two ex-editors he had in mind, of course, are distinguished experts on the quality newspaper market: Kelvin McKenzie and Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson.

JUST FANCY THAT

"More and more prisoners are being allowed to write to newspapers, as if they were any normal Disgusted... To be able to write to the newspapers, or telephone a radio call-in show, is an important freedom, of the sort which should belong only to the law-abiding. Why should it be extended to those who have been deprived of their freedom by due process of law, often for serious crime?"

— Frank Johnson, Daily Telegraph, 12 January 1995

"Private Lee Clegg has written from prison to the *Daily Telegraph* to express gratitude for the massive public support over the campaign to free him from a life sentence for the murder of a joyrider in Northern Ireland."

— Front-page news story in Daily Telegraph 27 January 1995

A RATHER one-sided view gripped the newspapers the day after the Animal Sparts attacked the home of the owner of Phoenix Aviation, the company which flies veal calves out of the country from Coventry.

MARCH OF THE MOB screamed the *Daily Mail* over a charming picture of Phoenix boss Christopher Barrett-Jolly and his wife. A leader on 4 February railed against the "hijacking of a peaceful protest" and described Mr Barrett-Jolly as "a businessman in the veal trade".

If anyone at the *Mail* had checked the cuttings of a couple of days before Christmas they would have found that Mr Barrett-Jolly is much more than that. His jet had just crashed over Coventry killing five people. The *Daily Mirror* and the *Independent* exposed his earlier exploits running arms to the warring sides in the Yemen and in Angola. And in March 1993 Crosby Otobo, a Nigerian pilot, was jailed for eight years for flying heroin and cocaine into Britain in a Phoenix aircraft.

Nor were Mr and Mrs Barrett-Jolly quite the aggrieved media-friendly types portrayed in the *Mail*. Asked to comment by the *Independent*, Mrs B-J replied: "You worthless piece of shit! Is there no level to which you scum won't stoop to?" The *Mirror* reporters spoke to the husband, who said: "If this is printed, you guys will be dead come Monday".

OLDIE GIVES MILLIGAN AWARD

ONE MAN who shed few tears over the departure of *Observer* **editor Jonathan Fenby was the** *Grauniad*'s **picture editor Eamonn McCabe. He had been turned down by Fenby 18 months ago when he suggested himself as "picture editor-in-chief" of both papers.**

But with his main obstacle removed, McCabe was looking forward to nominating himself again to his powerful chum Alan Rusbridger, the *Grauniad*'s new editor. Alas! A couple of weeks ago the chairman of the trust that owns the two papers, Hugo Young, received an indignant letter from an old friend of his, former *Sunday Times* hack Colin Simpson. The gist of Simpson's complaint was that McCabe had "behaved quite appallingly" to his daughter, Milly.

Milly, a freelance picture researcher, had been approached by a *Grauniad* photographer last November and asked to help organise "a photoshoot of some aspects of youth culture" for the paper's tabloid section. This she duly did. The photographer also took a few pictures of Milly herself, but there was never any suggestion that these would be used (apart from anything else she had not signed the obligatory "model release form", and would not have done so if asked).

Imagine Milly's surprise to see her photo in the *Grauniad* shortly afterwards, above a caption describing her as "a leader of North London yobbo girl gangs". She complained at once, demanding that the paper apologise and hand over the negatives to stop them being used again. The picture desk ignored her.

Three weeks later another and even more damaging photo of Milly appeared in the *Grauniad*. Once again she was described as a girl gangster. On the same day yet another picture of her, with a similar caption, was printed in the *Sun*. The *Sun* told her that it had bought the photo from the *Guardian*.

At this point Milly and her father asked a solicitor to send a letter on her behalf to Eamonn McCabe, with a copy to Peter Preston. By mid-January, six weeks later, they had still heard nothing. Hence Colin Simpson's appeal to Hugo Young.

Young was deeply shocked by the story. He promptly informed Preston, who forced McCabe to send Milly Simpson a grovelling apology and an assurance that all the remaining photographs had been destroyed. Whether the affair has also destroyed McCabe's ambition of becoming picture supremo of both the *Observer* and the *Guardian* remains to be seen.

MARK HUMPHREYS, 30, a witness for *Private Eye* **in the recent libel case involving former north Wales policeman Gordon Anglesea, has hanged himself.**

Mr Humphreys originally agreed to speak to Harlech Television in its inquiries about Mr Anglesea, and appeared incognito on its programme in September 1992. When the *Eye* and other newspapers followed up the story, Mr Humphreys agreed, for no payment or other consideration, to tell us his story too; and he stuck to it during a long and painful cross-examination in the recent high court case.

A friend told the *Eye*: "He never got over the fact that he was not believed."

THIS week's awards ceremony hosted by Emily's List — the outfit run by Barbara Follett with the aim of getting more women into parliament — was greeted with a fusillade of abuse from the media sisterhood.

In a two-page salvo in the *Independent on Sunday*, Geraldine Bedell denounced Emily's List as "prissy" and "twee"; the very idea of it filled her with "nausea".

The article was illustrated by a photo of the organisation's founders, including La Follett and Mo Mowlam MP. But Bedell neglected to mention one small fact: her own ex-husband, City banker Jon Norton, is now shacked up with Mo Mowlam, whom he met at the house of Barbara Follett. Could this, perchance, have anything to do with her bilious attitude?

Meanwhile over at the *Sunday Times* Janine di Giovanni delivered an equally fierce attack, headed "Sisters beware Emily's little list". She was particularly angry that the supporters of Emily's List included ex-Chatto & Windus boss Carmen Callil and the author Naomi Woolf, whom she denounced as "an American feminist discovered by Callil who made a fortune by writing a book cursing a society that demands physical perfection in women — then went on to promote her book on the basis of being beautiful".

In fact Woolf was paid just over £30,000 by Chatto for her book, *The Beauty Myth*. Funnily enough, Janine di Giovanni has herself received an advance of £32,500 from Chatto for *The Girls On The Bridge*, a book cursing a society in which thirtysomething women "find themselves facing a bewildering and unachievable ideal". And, like Woolf, di Giovanni is rather glamorous. Do the words "pot" and "kettle" spring to mind?

ON 23 January the *Independent* carried a leading article slagging off Bill Morris, general secretary of the Transport & General Workers' Union, for opposing Tony Blair on the Clause 4 debate.

The following day, the *Independent* printed a letter from Philippa Langton, a T&G member, praising the editorial. Martin Jacques, formerly of *Marxism Today* fame, is deputy editor of the *Independent*. He is otherwise known as Mr Philippa Langton.

BEE STING

THE *Sun* recently included a whole page of stories extolling the "magical properties" of propolis, a gum from poplar trees which is used by bees to bung up holes in their hives.

According to the rag, the miraculous "bee cure" can be used to treat mouth ulcers, asthma, arthritis, bronchitis, eczema, rheumatism, viral infections and countless other ailments.

The *Sun*'s enthusiasm was hardly surprising since the paper is itself earning money from Bee Health, the Yorkshire company which has cornered the market in propolis capsules and skin creams. There was a large advert from Bee Health on the same page as the gushing articles, boasting that it had acquired 50,000 *Sun*-reading customers since a similar puff piece last March.

"Doctors around Britain are astonished by the success of the ancient remedy," the *Sun* reported, "and now scientists at Oxford University believe it could hold the key to beating conditions like multiple sclerosis."

Which scientists? We weren't told. But the only major study of propolis at Oxford University, carried out by a team from the department of plant sciences between 1989 and 1992, scarcely bears out the *Sun*'s extravagant claims. In a paper for the *Bulletin of the Groupe Polyphenols*, for instance, they warned that "application of propolis as a medicant, in particular when used externally, can cause allergenic contact dermatitis by inducing sensitivity."

The leader of the research team, Professor Bill Greenaway, was even blunter when the *Eye* spoke to him last week. "The only thing that's medically certain about propolis is that it's an allergenic and some people can develop a very strong and nasty allergic reaction to it. It can be nasty, real nasty. I think it's a very dangerous thing to recommend."

Can the *Sun* really afford to sacrifice its readers in this way?

HALLO! THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! *WILL the persecution of the great Lord Archer never end?*

Following revelations about his friendship with a blonde commodities dealer who made a killing on the Anglia shares, we gather that Newsnight hack Michael Crick, who is writing a biography of the brilliant Archer, had an affidavit from a certain blonde diary hackette alleging a brief but beautiful friendship.

Unlike Crick's revelations about Major's old flame, this was somewhat more recent.

HALLO! FOR Queen Brenda the *annus horribilis* continues: a mere commoner from Gravesend has been charged with a litter offence and intends to summons "Elizabeth Windsor" as a witness.

The felony occurred when the queen drove to Chatham recently and a woman distributed spoof banknotes carrying the head of Elizabeth R, plus the words: "What do you call someone who doesn't own the property they live in, avoids the poll tax, pays no rent, and expects the taxpayer to foot the bill? *Your majesty*."

The queen witnessed this heinous crime, and so the police promptly apprehended the dangerous outlaw (who gave her name as Elizabeth Windsor of Buckingham Palace). Gillian Emerson of Gravesend has now been charged with a litter offence.

The queen's solicitor, Farrer & Co, confirms that present in the Queen's Roller were chauffeur David Griffin, superintendent Peter Prentice and lady-in-waiting, the Hon Mary Morrison. All will be summonsed, but Farrer's insists the Queen cannot appear. For this Farrer's rely on royal prerogative — the same hallowed tradition that exempted Brenda from the poll tax.

HALLO! *ACCOMPANYING Princess Diana to the Fashion Designers of America awards we were appalled by the vulgar "family values" campaigners who tried to spoil this terribly important occasion.*

Standing outside the New York State Theater they held up placards saying things like "Marriage is for Life" and other bits of nonsense. And while the Marquesa's elegant chums cooed "Move to New York" as Diana sashayed to the podium, two lone killjoys shouted out: "Go back to your children!"

Thankfully this disgraceful behaviour was not given the oxygen of publicity by the British press, which concentrated instead on the vital issue of the Russian slaughter of children in Chechnya (Er, "Diana's new wet-look haircut", shurely?)

HALLO! TO SALTWOOD Castle, Kent, where rampant former defence minister Alan Clark hotly denies that he has prevented Weidenfeld & Nicolson, publisher of his notorious *Diaries*, from bringing out the diaries of another Clark — his younger brother, Colin.

"Bollocks," bellows Alan, the man who made famous the phrase "economical with the *actualité*, as he chases the Marquesa round the table.

This is strange: for as Alan's brother, Colin Clark, tells me: "Weidenfeld were definitely interested. I'd even begun work on editing with Ion Trewin. Suddenly we heard nothing more and my agent Pat Kavanagh told me that Alan had put a stop to it."

"Col", a retired film producer, explains that his diaries (from 1955 when he was an assistant on Laurence Olivier's *The Prince and the Showgirl* with Marilyn Monroe) continues the family tradition established by father, art historian Lord Clark. There is much, he winks, chasing gels round tables.

HALLO! *THERE is considerable tension between the saintly Duchess of York and her bald financial adviser, Johnny Bryan.*

The selfless Duchess, we gather, would love to make the break but fears the greedy Bryan would not hesitate to sell their "story" for zillions. Will blameless Fergie escape the clutches of the rapacious Texan? The Marquesa can't wait for this story's "nail-biting climax".

HALLO! *STROLLING down Lombard Street in the City the Marquesa spots Norman Lamont stepping from a black cab into the path of an on-coming red bus.*

The bus skids to a halt and Norman quips: "I thought you were going to run me over!"

The busman replies: "Nah, mate, you're worth more to Labour alive."

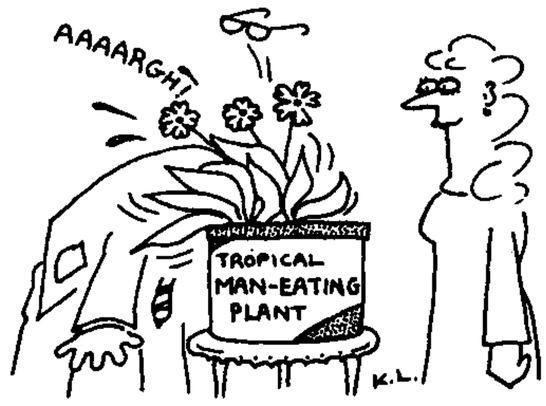
HALLO! WE are glad to be able to report that the heart of Lord McAlpine, the Tory party treasurer who was so adept at eliciting funds from industrialists and entrepreneurs during Lady Thatcher's premiership, is like a rock.

When he asked the surgeon who had performed a bypass operation on him what it had been like to hold his heart in his hands, the surgeon replied: "Your's is a very hard heart, Lord McAlpine." "Oh good!" was the Tory peer's jovial reaction.

HALLO! *PITY Michael Winner's ex: the tragic actress Jenny Seagrove. The Paper Round, a recycling newsletter, reports how it received a "distressed" call from the poor darling.*

"Jenny Seagrove told us she receives hundreds of letters from star-struck fans, and was appalled by the amount of paper she was throwing out." Happily she has now been provided, the newsletter says, with a paper recycling Big Bin so she can trash all her fan mail with a clear conscience. If she were still "seeing" Winner, they could chuck all his Sunday Times pieces in it, too.

'The Marquesa'



WHEN Tony Blair launched his dump Clause 4 campaign in Gateshead, the press was ecstatic.

Few dissenting voices were raised at this first meeting, and the following day's papers deliriously reported Blair's messianic triumph in converting his lumpen Labour rank and file. Those traditionally gritty northerners seemed to be falling over themselves to dump all that irritating socialist claptrap. Well, not quite.

The audience at Gateshead civic centre had been hand-picked. It was an all-ticket affair, with tickets distributed through MPs. They were thus able to choose who attended. It was, as they say in boxing, a classic fix.

VOTING in the valleys of South Wales is not destined to go the Tories' way — especially not in Islwyn, the seat Neil Kinnock has relinquished to become the European transport commissioner in Brussels.

In a desperate attempt to drum up support for the Tories in the forthcoming by-election, the party wanted to ship in three Conservative MPs who contested the seat back in the 1970s. Two of the cheerleaders failed to raise any interest whatsoever: the unexceptional Peter Brooke, one time Northern Ireland secretary; and the undistinguished Paul Marland, MP for Gloucestershire West, were both too dull.

However, the third "star" left local Welsh Tories choking with outrage: it was Tim Yeo, whose extra marital affairs contributed to the run of "back to basics" scandals last year and who is hardly the man to carry the torch for family values in South Wales. The actual candidate, local county councillor Robert Buckland, would probably do better on his own.

HACKS at the BT Welsh Press Awards in Cardiff were mystified at the choice of guest speaker — Neil Hamilton, the ritzy (*sic*) former Tory minister who resigned in the cash-for-questions furore.

Hamilton was raised in South Wales but, with a determination matched only by fellow Taffs Michael Heseltine, Michael Howard, Geoffrey Howe and Roy Jenkins, he has avoided all trace of the backwardly-mobile accent.

The sozzled journos soon realised that this Tory from the valleys was meant to be the comic turn — especially when he started talking about being a Tory candidate in the mining communities of Abertillery 20 years ago.

Hamilton joked that Tory support fell from 12 percent to 8 percent, which prompted cheers from the crowd. But he hit back with a witty punchline: "We got our own back later. We changed all the constituencies... and closed all the pits!"

"Fuck off you Tory bastard," was the reply from the floor, summing up eloquently the feelings of the assembled wordsmiths.

NOTHING is more sad than the sight of desperate Tory MPs being shafted by the boundary commission before the voters have the chance to do it first.

Kensington's Dudley Fishburn, who woke one morning last month to find that his job for life had disappeared, was naively hoping he could transfer to adjacent Chelsea when Sir Nicholas "Disabled" Scott retires. Sadly for "Dud", a former journalist, it turns out that Chelsea's Tory bigwigs have other ideas. They plan to summon home James Arbuthnot, their former council whip and an Old Etonian, whose Wanstead seat is also disappearing.

By coincidence "Dud" is an OE too. But as one titled Chelsea Conservative explained to the *Eye*: "A chap being a journo is a touch too close to being in trade." So much for the classless society.

CHIEF target of the Thatcherite wing of the Tory party is heritage minister Stephen Dorrell.

Ever since he suggested some form of control over businessmen who hand out all their profits to shareholders, Dorrell has been singled out for attack by the few rich men, led by Lord Hanson, who still pour money into the Tory party.

On 5 February Lord McAlpine, treasurer of the party under Margaret Thatcher, weighed in with a ferocious onslaught on Dorrell across a full-page of the *Mail on Sunday*. He denounced the heritage minister as a wet and a philistine, and attacked a recent Dorrell speech which, horror of horrors, played down the importance of home-ownership.

In the great home-buying spree of the 1980s, McAlpine wrote, "a myriad of other industries prospered. Building firms, kitchen installers, bathroom specialists, carpet warehouses, DIY superstores". Modestly McAlpine did not declare his interest as a director for 30 years of Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons, one of the country's biggest building firms, with all sorts of subsidiaries in supplies, installations and DIY, etc.

JOHN HORAM, the member for Orpington, has been something of a political gadfly, sitting as an MP for every party in parliament save the Ulster Unionists.

Now he also sits on the public accounts committee where noble minds examine the spending of public money by government departments. His colleagues there may be interested to know of the writ just served against Mr Horam by his former business partner in CRU Publishing (Holdings) Limited.

Louis Perlman is claiming damages from Horam, among others, for "fraudulent and/or negligent misrepresentation and/or damages for conspiracy".

> Teresa Gorman, the outspoken MP for Billericay, set the mood of the meeting by telling her colleagues that she would abstain from the vote.
>
> Her defiance quickly spread to the male members of the group, most of whom hardened their previous intentions.
>
> *The Times*

THE ministry of defence has shot itself in both feet while trying to privatise the married quarters of armed forces personnel, 12,000 of which lie empty.

It has already spent £5 million on the cock-up with most of it going to management consultants and merchant bankers, as usual. The same helpful types are now being employed to help extricate the MoD from the mess they got it into in the first place.

The original plan was that the treasury would give the MoD £500 million compensation for losing its housing assets. The housing would then go to the specially created Crown Housing Trust, which would raise private capital to repair the crumbling homes. But the plan collapsed when the MoD wanted to keep the freeholds of its buildings and to continue to control the rents. Even treasury mandarins saw that it was ludicrous to give the MoD £500 million for something it would still ultimately own.

Meanwhile, however, the MoD had recruited former Bristol city council chief executive Michael Robinson on a three-year contract — at £100,000 a year — to run the non-existent Crown Housing Trust. Panicking ministers needed somewhere for him to go; so they dreamt up the Defence Housing Executive.

This "executive" will bring together the three services' housing departments, while ministers waffle about what to do next.

MILLIONAIRE newcomer to the Commons Margaret Hodge has had a tricky time with some of her fellow Labour MPs.

A former leader of Islington council and now a devoted Blairite member for Barking, Hodge agreed to debate Clause 4 with hard left MP Jeremy Corbyn in front of an earnest crowd at the Red Rose Centre in Islington.

Corbyn argued to retain the public ownership clause while Hodge said electoral victory must come first. Corbyn won the crowd over completely — at which point Hodge turned from cool pragmatist into fuming maniac. She rose to reply and completely blew her gasket: she called the astonished crowd stupid and accused them of loving being in opposition and of having their heads in the sand. Of the hundred or so present, only two voted in favour of Hodge, one of them being Stephen Twigg, ex-president of the NUS and now Hodge's researcher).

LOCKERBIE

DOUGLAS HURD's oily but pathetic performance in the Commons adjournment debate on Lockerbie (1 February) symbolised the dilemma of a government whose intelligence services, within hours of the explosion, knew perfectly well who had bombed Pan Am flight 103.

The bomb was made and planted by a terrorist gang harboured by Syria and paid by the Iranian government to avenge the bombing of an Iranian airbus the summer before Lockerbie. The German and Swedish police had arrested some of the gang, and by March 1989, three months after the bombing, police, politicians and journalists in the know were all expecting the gang to be charged with Lockerbie.

Then came a mysterious phone call from President Bush to prime minister Thatcher, ordering her to "low-key" the Lockerbie affair. The gang who did the bombing dropped out of the frame to be replaced in November 1991 by two Libyans.

Some Lockerbie experts still try to square this circle. On 28 January Alasdair Palmer wrote in the *Spectator* that Iran and Syria and Libya were all responsible for the bombing. He argued that the bomb started in Malta, and changed planes at Frankfurt and at Heathrow before going off.

The same scenario was "reconstructed" in a Granada TV programme in 1990 called *Why Lockerbie?* It showed a nasty-looking Arab putting a bomb on an airliner in Malta, and slinking away. Air Malta promptly sued Granada for libel. In 1993 the case was settled. Granada paid up, and a statement read in court declared that the bomb could not have got on the plane the way the programme said it had. The researcher on the programme was an ambitious young journalist called Alasdair Palmer.

'Backbiter'

THE lord chief justice's recent demand that lawyers should "cut out the waffle", thereby saving the public from excessive legal fees, was enthusiastically endorsed by our old friend Peter Carter-Fuck.

In a leader-page article for the *Mail on Sunday* — which billed him as "one of Britain's leading solicitors" — Carter-Fuck argued that the legal profession was "increasingly experiencing the chill wind of public disdain: charged with running up huge legal fees in unnecessary and lengthy civil cases". To restore their reputation "lawyers today must heed the words of Lord Taylor and act speedily to curb long hearings and outrageously high costs".

The *Eye* has long experience of lawyers who charge "outrageously high costs". A few years ago, for instance, we paid £20,000 in damages to a man who sued us for libel. His solicitor then submitted a bill for costs of £94,511.74. We referred it to the taxing master, a court official who assesses whether costs are fair or not. After scrutinising the documents, the master reduced the bill to £42,333.93.

In short, the solicitor had been overcharging by more than 100 per cent! And who was this avaricious lawyer? Step forward Peter Carter-Fuck...

NOOKS and CORNERS

HARD on the heels of the Cardiff Bay opera house fiasco (*Eyes passim*) come more examples of the failure of British architecture.

Two weeks ago the results were published, coincidentally, of two limited competitions to deal with two tiresome and intractable old buildings. One was to convert Bankside power station into the Tate Gallery's new Museum of Modern Art.

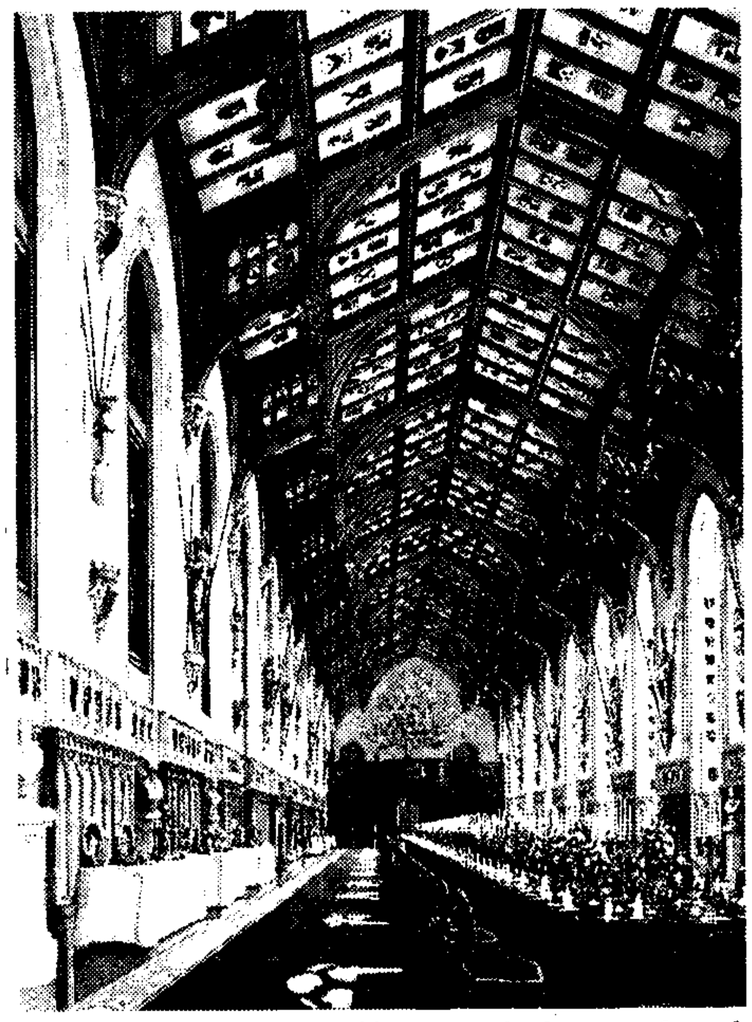
As this column argued in favour of retaining Sir Giles Scott's last great temple of power and against the destructive machinations of Nuclear Electric and its friends, we are naturally delighted by this turn of events. For the conversion of Bankside, the Tate's director Nicholas Serota invited an international cast of superstars and poseurs to compete; and his assessors have now decided in favour of the young Swiss modernists, Jacques Herzog & Pierre De Meuron. Who they? Actually they are probably a good choice as this minimalist pair are likely to respect the integrity of Scott's stunning pile of brickwork.

What is depressing and all too typical is that the one British architect to reach the shortlist, David Chipperfield, actually proposed demolishing Scott's great campanile-chimney. What on earth is the point of keeping the building if you are then going to mutilate it? Such is the blundering incompetence of fashionable firms in Britain.

The seeming inability of any British architect to cope with the work of the past is shown by the simultaneous result of the limited competition held to restore the gutted interiors of Windsor Castle. Soon after the fire in 1992, all sorts of architects came to the rescue with various pretentious schemes to rebuild, none of which seemed to recognise the ceremonial functions of the destroyed rooms nor the Gothic character of the castle.

Buckingham Palace meanwhile ignored all this nonsense and set up a restoration committee advised by the special design committee chaired by the great pundit himself, HRH the Prince of Wales. Here, perhaps, was a chance for the royal family to rebut the charge that, with the glorious exception of fat old Prinny, the architectural patronage of the Hanoverian dynasty has been dismal and suburban; here was a chance for the Prince of Wales to realise his "Vision for Britain" and provide a traditional alternative to the modernism he hates with such blinkered passion.

Oh dear. After several changes of plan the former state dining room and Octagon Room are to be restored precisely to their former appearance, while St George's Hall and the private chapel are to be rebuilt by Messrs Sidell Gibson. St George's Hall is to have a new open timber roof instead of Sir Jeffry Wyatville's plaster vault, while the old chapel by Blore, spoiled by Sir Hugh



Casson, is to be replaced by an entirely new chapel, Gothic in style, separated from the banqueting hall by a new octagonal vestibule, a sort of dinky little version of the great Octagon of Ely Cathedral. And the heart sinks. Parts of the scheme are clever; and it is good that (laminated) timber is to be used in the new roofs. Yet the general effect, to judge by the published drawings, is thin, feeble and gutless.

What could have been done? Something with integrity in a modern Gothic such as Giles Scott achieved when rebuilding the burnt-out House of Commons or the Guildhall? Or an austere and powerful new traditionalism, superbly crafted, like the new interiors of Prague Castle designed by Plechnik in the 1920s? Alas the character of the proposed new work hardly improves upon Wyatville although it does not actually copy it. The lessons of the Gothic Revival, one of the greatest and most creative experiments in English architectural history, are ignored; there is nothing here of the decorative splendour of Pugin, of the tough, muscular convictions of Gilbert Scott, Burges and Butterfield, of the effortless elegance and refinement of the late Victorians and Edwardians like Temple Moore, Comper and Giles Scott.

Wyatville did a competent job at Windsor, though he was scarcely inspired. In fact, he was almost as ridiculous a figure as his distant kinsman, My Lord Wyatt of Weeford: when knighted and invited to smarten up his surname with a suffix, his proposal to urbanise the name of Wyatt was greeted by George IV with the remark: "Ville or mutton: call yourself what you like."

But what of Ron Sidelville and Paul de Gibson? (Actually the Windsor work was done by Sir Giles Downes.) As recounted in *Eye* 862 this is a firm which has risen without trace and now basks in royal approval. It made its name with its competition-winning design for Grand Buildings in Trafalgar Square: an opportunistic and cynical recreation of a worthless, fifth-rate Victorian pile which did the causes both of conservation and of a modern traditionalism immense harm. Since then, the firm has designed several buildings for the Prince of Wales, notably a pretentious and inept piece of Classicism on the Duchy of Cornwall estate in Kennington.

It is hard, therefore, not to suspect that the Prince of Wales wanted Sidell Gibson all along. So much for the competition to find brilliant and sympathetic ideas for dragging Windsor Castle into the new millennium. Perhaps the sad fact is that British architects, of whatever persuasion, are simply not up to it. And at least the Duke of Edinburgh did not wheel in dear Hugh Casson to do the job. Come back Sir Jeffry; all is forgiven. Veal or mutton? What we are going to get is Royal Spam.

'Piloti'

Pseuds Corner

There's one incident which I think is indicative of our relationship. We were roaming in the hills and there was a moment when Nancy [Kline] stopped and said, "Isn't it lovely? Look at the view." And I, from a bit higher up, said: "It's lovely where you are, but come and look from here." That's what we do for each other all the time, challenge each other to go right up to the edge of possibility.

CHRISTOPHER SPENCE
Independent on Sunday

Your leading article of 21 January makes an apposite comment on the reverential attitude of the prehistoric cave painters of Vallon-Pont-d'Arc towards the animals they hunted, killed and ate. But there is another fundamental material contrast between prehistoric societies and our own. Big-game hunting communities operate through collective processes of production and consumption that have led some anthropologists to describe them as "primitive communist".

What the protestors of Shoreham and Brightlingsea, the Claremont Road anti-M11 campaigners and others are resisting is precisely the ideology of free-market forces that justifies ruthless exploitation of the natural environment by a few profit-hungry individuals, squeezing the last drop of blood from every living creature. In calling a halt to such selfish abuse, these broad coalitions of activists are on a collision course with the economics of privatisation. It is but a small step to the ideals of the Labour Party's Clause IV, and a return of the resources of our planet to community ownership and control.

CHRIS KNIGHT (Dept of Sociology, Univ. of E. London)
CAMILLA POWER (University College, London)
Letter to the Independent

Do you fancy Michael Portillo?

Of course.

Why?

His lips, his lips — so continental, yet xenophobic, yielding yet somehow stiff, wet yet, strangely dry. He reminds me of my head boy at school.

MARK SIMPSON
Modern Review

Though he [Keanu Reeves] had been an athletic, piratical Hamlet, there is this huge, I can only call it ethereal, element. He is retiring from society, from life — and that might be dangerous; his spirituality could intensify, and he could spirit away. He is in his dressing room hours before the show. I'll bet he is bouncing around and getting himself into mortal and human shape so that he can reappear on stage. For he is an eagle, really; or a glossy and supple stallion.

ROGER LEWIS
Sunday Times

So it is with *Flesh and Stone*. Sennett's book is so nearly what I would want it to be that I find myself fraudulently recomposing its structure, collaging a pirate edition. Which is the curse of the non-professional reviewer — the urge to reward or condemn a long-meditated thesis for failing to reveal itself at once, to a hurried and inadequate reading. My anti-review fails by the extent of its refusal to engage with the blueprint of the original. The fraudulent recomposition, the invented book, is part remembrance, part fantasy. All I can do, at the finish, is to approve and recommend whatever it is that I have been too preoccupied to properly celebrate.

IAN SINCLAIR
Times Literary Supplement

When a writer has legendised himself in his work as multiply as Robert Lowell, can a biographer be anything more than a stenographer to his parliament of selves?

JAMES WOOD
Guardian

CONTRIBUTORS: R. Chamberlain, K. Flett, S. Connolly, E. Wilson, M. Carlsson, Everyone.

£10 paid for entries

TV

The OJ Simpson Trial (NBC Superchannel/CNN International)
The Trial of OJ Simpson (BBC2)

THE MAJORITY of American television formats have eventually been copied by British television and the high-profile televised trial of OJ Simpson has inevitably revived the debate about the morality of cameras in the courts. Could it — should it — happen here?

Last year six Scottish cases were screened on BBC2 as an experiment. Is it time for such trials as, say, those of the Maxwell brothers, Rosemary West or Craig Charles to be shown in full? Cable viewers with access to the virtually witness-by-witness coverage on CNN and NBC's British channels — and those tuning to BBC2's Sunday night compilations from California — are able to use the Simpson broadcasts as a test-case.

The usual case for the prosecution against televised trials is that the proceedings become a "real-life soap opera" which pander to the "voyeuristic" instincts of viewers. In fact a crucial distinction needs to be made here. While the general news coverage of the Simpson case in America — on news bulletins, "infotainment" current affairs shows and in tabloid magazines — has indeed dealt with the murders and the trial in the lurid manner of an afternoon drama, the day to day television coverage of what has happened in court has been the one sober and responsible element in all the reporting.

No soap opera would dare inflict on its viewers the sheer tedium of the legal process: the endless delays and interruptions, the legal arguments out of view of the cameras. If a fully televised trial has something in common with any area of popular television, it is not soap opera but ball-by-ball test match cricket. Anyone tuning in for cheap thrills would soon tune out. The viewer of the Simpson trial is far more likely to reflect on how unlike *LA Law* and *Perry Mason* the whole thing is than how similar it is.

Indeed, while the televising of trials is often accused of bringing the American legal system into disrepute, it can be argued that the medium is now the only thing that keeps the system reasonably honest.

Whatever "evidence" and "witnesses" the public may have read about in *National Inquirer* or heard about on *A Current Affair*, there at least exists one uncorrupted source of information, and record of the actual facts of the case, which is the videotapes of the courtroom action, played back in to the news bulletins each night. Without that television footage, the details of a case would become completely lost in the mass of speculation and bought stories.

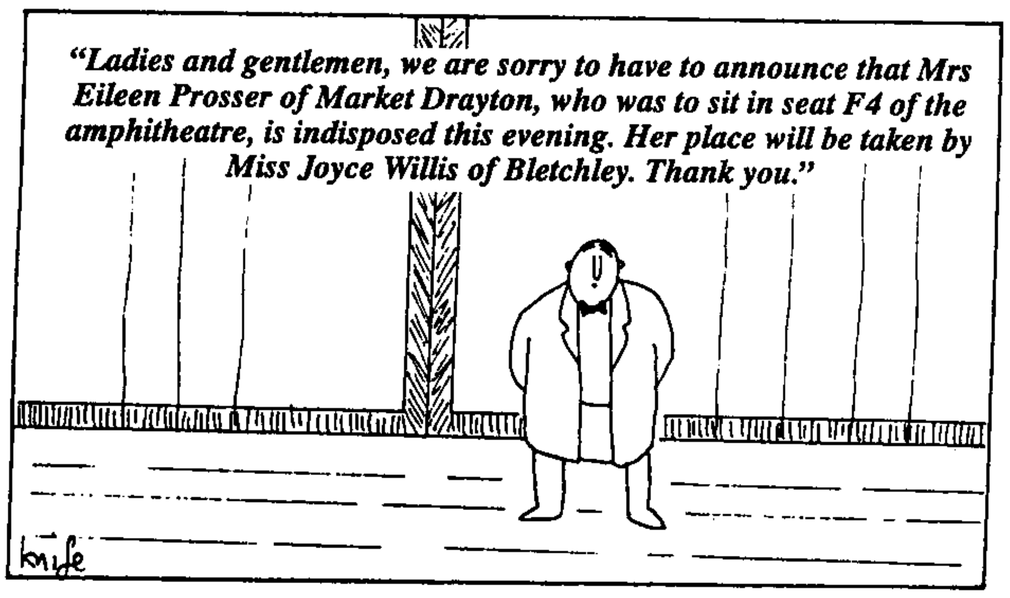
The other common objection is that the presence of television affects the conduct of the trial: that lawyers and judges become slickly telegenic figures playing to the viewer at home rather than to the jury. Well, this may be a reasonable fear to express with regard to the televising of parliament — because MPs do have a vested interest in impressing the public more than those in the chamber — but it is a largely phantom terror with regard to lawyers on the box. However vain they may be — and it is very, very vain in some cases — attorneys know perfectly well they live or die by their impact on the jury. Living room opinion doesn't count, and there is little evidence of the lawyers in the Simpson trial courting it.

Equally where are the made-for-TV beautiful people in the Simpson case, apart from the defendant himself? The judge is squat, podgy, bearded and bespectacled. The prosecuting team includes the haggard and pale Marcia Clark and the haggarder and paler William Hodgman. Ms Clark may have had a new "soft look" perm and elaborate facial make-up, but that is an attempt to influence the jury rather than couch potatoes at home.

Those who wish to keep the cameras out of British courts will raise the objection that — even if televised trials in America work as a corrective to the contempts of court occurring elsewhere in the press — there is no need for such a precaution in Britain, where draconian restrictions on pre-trial publicity protect the "fact base" in a case already.

In fact — as the Maxwell, West and Colin Stagg cases all show in different ways — greater competition between newspapers has vastly increased the risk of prejudicial coverage. Given that, and the general crisis of faith in the British legal system, the admission of cameras may now be the best way to protect the system. If the Luddite bores of the Bailey start putting it around that court TV is what wrecked American law, then they will be guilty of yet another blinkered misjudgement.

'Square Eyes'


"Ladies and gentlemen, we are sorry to have to announce that Mrs Eileen Prosser of Market Drayton, who was to sit in seat F4 of the amphitheatre, is indisposed this evening. Her place will be taken by Miss Joyce Willis of Bletchley. Thank you."
Knife

MEDIA NEWS

TV controllers held their collective breath after a controversial appearance by Tory MP Michael Fabricant on a BBC news programme.

They expected a flood of complaints about the MP's strong political remarks, but the duty log reported only one complaint: from a woman who had phoned to gripe that "Mr Fabrizzio's wig was an outrage and shouldn't be allowed on television".

This hasn't stopped Fabricant's soaring TV fame. Although he is known to political TV researchers as the last port of call when they can't find a talkative Tory, the MP has managed to land a role in a new political TV drama.

He boasted about this to the prime minister in the tearoom recently, and John Major politely asked if he had a speaking part. The boastful Fabricant replied yes — and trotted out his lines to the astonished PM.

When someone mentions a Tory leadership challenge, the Fabricant character replies: "Well anyone would be better than the deadbeat we've got at the moment." A flabbergasted Major asked who wrote the series and was even more dumbstruck to find that it was his own deputy chairman, Michael Dobbs.

TROUBLE off-camera at the dire daytime TV chatshow of Robert Kilroy-Silk, who cunningly placed one of his guests, Seamus Mallon, deputy leader of the SDLP, amid some headbanging extremist Ulster Unionists.

Killjoy then proceeded to wind-up the Ulster Unionists against the moderate Mallon, and as soon as the cameras were off one enraged Unionist punched Mallon. Ever the gent, Seamus appealed to his host: "Did you see that?"

The courageous Killjoy turned his back, whereupon the Unionist promptly bashed the SDLP MP again. "Why didn't you do anything?" a bemused (and battered) Seamus later asked.

"I didn't see a thing," said the fearless hero.

PS: Kilroy-Silk recently asked viewers to contact him if they wanted to take part in a show about homelessness. The telephone number given turned out to be a cash-generating 0891 number, with calls charged at up to 48p a minute. Presumably the homeless will have been only too willing to spend their last few coins on ringing Killjoy rather than, say, on buying a bite to eat.

● *See Hackwatch, page 11.*

WHEN Radio 4 axed the widely hated *Anderson Country*, assurances were given that Gerry Anderson, its presenter, would continue to contribute to the network and that he held no hard feelings about the BBC's (rare) decision to give in to listener pressure.

Obviously there's been a misunderstanding: a bruised Gerry has returned home and, as they say, poured out his heart.

"It was a sickener what happened to me on Radio 4," he told the *Belfast Telegraph*. "And I never want to return to London — not even Radio 2 where I would have been better suited in the first place. If I were offered another job in London today I would turn it down flat. I have had enough."

WHO SAYS THE BBC ISN'T INNOVATIVE?
SO WHY'S HE CALLED DR. DANGERFIELD?
Dangerfield
HE'S A DOCTOR...
HE GETS IN DANGER WITH THE POLICE...
AND THERE'S LOTS OF FIELDS...
HOSPITAL
HEARTBEAT, CRACKER, PEAK PRACTICE RATINGS
AND YOU NEVER GET THAT SORT OF THING ON ITV!
BBC1
Kin Pyne

I-BSkyB

Freedom for the Czechs means freedom to say what you like about the Russians, freedom to watch Sky TV and freedom to buy what you want in the gleaming new supermarkets.

Times Magazine

CONTRIBUTOR: E.J.R. Miller

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

LAST YEAR Yorkshire TV received more than 40 complaints about the transformation of *Emmerdale*.

The gentle farming soap had reputedly become a violent, glamorised social drama with Lockerbie-style air crashes, lesbian love scenes and farmyard punch-ups raising viewers' blood pressure to boiling point.

But the complaints were nothing compared to the deluge which followed a certain episode of *Through the Keyhole*, the show which noses round the homes of dubious celebs with its frontman Loyd "utterly" Grossman. The episode? The one which had the magnificent Eve Pollard as a guest.

Lady Bollard's frock could only be described as minimalist, and it managed to annoy an astonishing 86 viewers. One wrote to say he was embarrassed to watch the show with his young grandson. The boy had turned around, with a look of bewilderment on his face, and said: "Grandad that lady's wearing her bottom on her chest."

"We've isolated the gene that causes My Little Pony..."

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

AFTER a long struggle the greysuits at the BBC have finally managed to squeeze more for less from their house orchestras.

An offer to the orchestras went to a third ballot at Christmas, but with no recommendation from the union. The Beeb threatened that it might "reconsider its commitments to BBC orchestras", and under such pressure the BBC players finally caved in.

Now, in return for a pathetic 3 percent increase on already pitifully low basic pay, the BBC buys all the rights to exploit commercial CD, TV and video recordings that its orchestras make in the concert hall and studio. By charging commercial recording, TV and film companies a fraction of the normal union recording rate, it can attract much business away from the independent orchestras who depend on it to offset their losses on concert promotions. This move suits large multinationals like Polygram, BMG and Sony, for not only do they get their product on the cheap, but the BBC will plug their recordings over the air for free.

The number of sessions the BBC wants from its house orchestras has also risen over the past few years. Currently it insists on 40 from each of the five orchestras per year with free rehearsals and patching sessions, plus six TV programmes, with all rights bought out for foreign sales, satellite, cable and video in perpetuity.

By surrendering, the BBC players have enabled the BBC to undercut fellow musicians outside the corporation who depend on this work to survive.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

HACKWATCH: ROBERT KILROY-SILK

ROBERT Kilroy-Silk — or "Kilroy", as he prefers to be known these days — has had a varied career. First a university lecturer, then an earnest Labour politician, he is now the sweaty, suntanned host of a pisspoor daytime chat-show and a weekly columnist for that well-known left-wing rag the *Daily Express*.

When he resigned from parliament he claimed — as Labour defectors usually do — that his own political views hadn't changed at all. The party had left him, rather than *vice versa*.

How odd, then, that his *Express* column is so relentlessly anti-socialist. (The only reason he took a shine to Tony Blair last year was that the Labour leader had "a non-socialist message".) Can this really tally with what he thought when he was a left-wing backbencher? We must assume so. For, as the following extracts prove, he is a man of strong and consistently held opinions...

20 June 1994: With the Labour leadership contest in full swing, Kilroy issues an urgent bulletin: "Margaret Beckett's mask has slipped." Behind her "cleverly constructed facade of moderation", he warns, there "lurks a harridan of the Left."

27 June: Another week, another opinion. "We should not write off Margaret Beckett's chances of winning the Labour leadership contest," he predicts. She is not as left-wing as she seems. "Labour, with Margaret Beckett as its leader advocating policies known to be attractive to the majority of the electorate, will probably win the next election. And she will probably be a better prime minister than Margaret Thatcher."

4 July: Fulsome praise for the health secretary. "Virginia Bottomley has got the right prescription," he believes. "The medicine is working."

18 July: Not any more. Incensed by the health secretary's continual appearances on the *Today* programme, and her refusal "to make herself accountable to real people", Kilroy announces that Virginia Bottomley "has been uncovered as a woman who is in the business of self-promotion rather than seeking to advance public accountability".

25 July: Kilroy is unimpressed by the new Labour leader. "Tony Blair, while clearly a clever, nice, sensible and decent man, is not exactly an inspiring political giant." He didn't even manage to enthuse his own supporters: "Almost a third of party members did not vote and four-fifths of union members paying the political levy abstained. A derisory 15 percent of the Engineers' Union chose to participate in Labour's great democratic experiment." If Blair can't motivate them, he is unlikely to win much support from the general public. "John Major," Kilroy concludes, "should sleep easier at night."

8 August: A gushing tribute to "young Tony Blair, with his soft voice, sensible policies, middle-class voter appeal and massive opinion poll lead."

15 August: The love-in continues. Contradicting what he wrote only three weeks ago, Kilroy notes that "Tony Blair received the overwhelming endorsement of all sections of the party" in the leadership election. Oh, and it turns out that the general public adore him too: he is "regarded by voters as the friendliest, cleverest and most attractive of the three party leaders." Elsewhere in the column, Kilroy condemns local councillors in Liverpool for arguing that Petrona Lashley is unfit to be the city's lord mayor because of her convictions for prostitution and fraud. "Just because Cllr. Lashley has a criminal record, it does not mean she cannot be a competent and effective councillor," he writes. "It could be that her experiences give her an insight and compassion that she would not otherwise possess. She may be better able to empathise with her constituents." He also wonders if Lashley, who is black, would have endured such flak if she had had "the good fortune" to be an attractive white woman.

29 August: Petrona Lashley has claimed that she was dropped by the Labour party in Liverpool because she was black. Forgetting that he had made the same point himself, Kilroy declares: "That is a nonsense and she knows it. It is merely an excuse to cover her personal failings." The failings in question are her convictions for prostitution and fraud, which made her position "unsustainable".

5 September: "Tony Blair looks like becoming a very formidable politician... He also has a sure sense of priorities."

3 October: Previewing the Labour party conference, Kilroy observes that Blair "is not hidebound by the past, he's not in hock to the unions and is unencumbered by an obsolete and suffocating political ideology. He sounds as if he will do the fair, the right thing. He probably will."

Turning to another subject, the columnist allows himself a little self-congratulation: "As was first pointed out in this column last month, the IRA ceasefire will not last." Really? Looking back at what Kilroy actually wrote on 5 September, one finds this: "The IRA ceasefire means that either the IRA has surrendered or the British government has done a deal with the terrorists and sold out the people of Ulster. All the signs are that the IRA has been forced to concede defeat in its attempt to create a united Ireland by force."

10 October: A triumph! Tony Blair "towered over Labour's conference in Blackpool last week... The Labour leader has elevated political debate to a new level. He has introduced a directness, frankness, honesty and seriousness into political discussion that did not exist before."

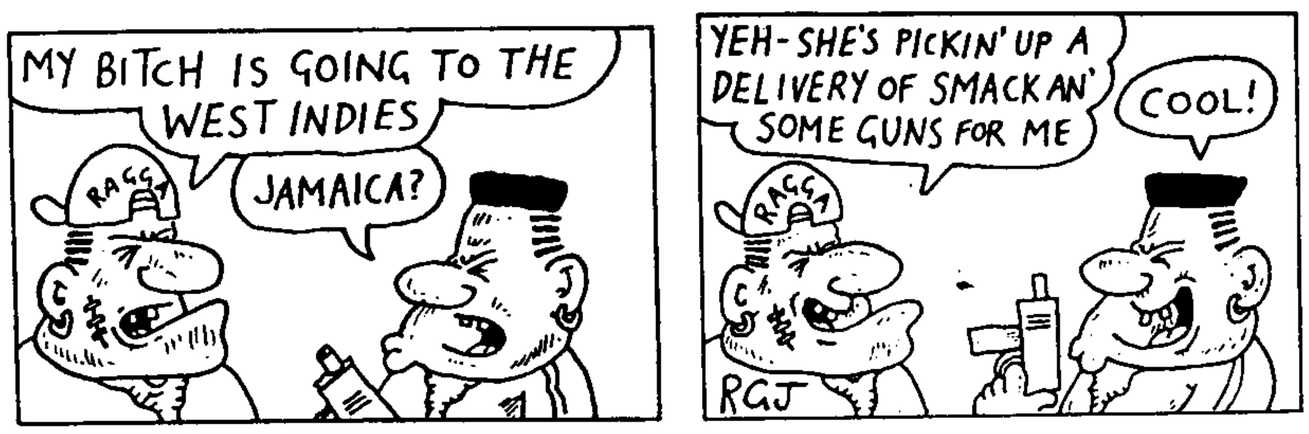
24 October: Another triumph! "In his first two interventions at question time in the House of Commons, Tony Blair looked more like a prime minister than John Major ever has, or is ever likely to... Tony Blair is so patently sincere, honest and incorruptible that he could hardly fail to succeed."

5 December: Oh dear: it has all ended in tears. "We cannot trust the young leader of Her Majesty's Opposition," Kilroy rages. "He's just another ambitious career politician." And why? Because Blair is sending his son Euan to the London Oratory School.

19 December: Now that Kilroy has disowned him, poor Tony Blair can do nothing right. The result of the Dudley West by-election "must be very worrying for Blair", the columnist claims, since it proves that "the people don't trust his party." He neglects to mention that Labour in fact won the by-election, with the biggest swing since the war.

9 January 1995: Sneering at the Labour leader as a failed "Boy Wonder", Kilroy returns to the subject of Euan Blair's education. "The Euan episode has undermined Tony Blair's esteem, credibility and authority."

16 January: "Silly Tony Blair. Did he not realise that Labour impotence would be the outcome of his cynical attempt to garner Scottish votes by promising them devolution?" The Labour party, we are told, is "full of humbug". Unlike our own dear Kilroy, of course.



DOING THE ROUNDS

LAST month Peter Moulds, a patient at Stockport's Stepping Hill hospital suffered a heart attack while recovering from an operation. His family was told that as all the intensive care beds were full, he would have to be transferred to Salford's Hope hospital. He died in the ambulance.

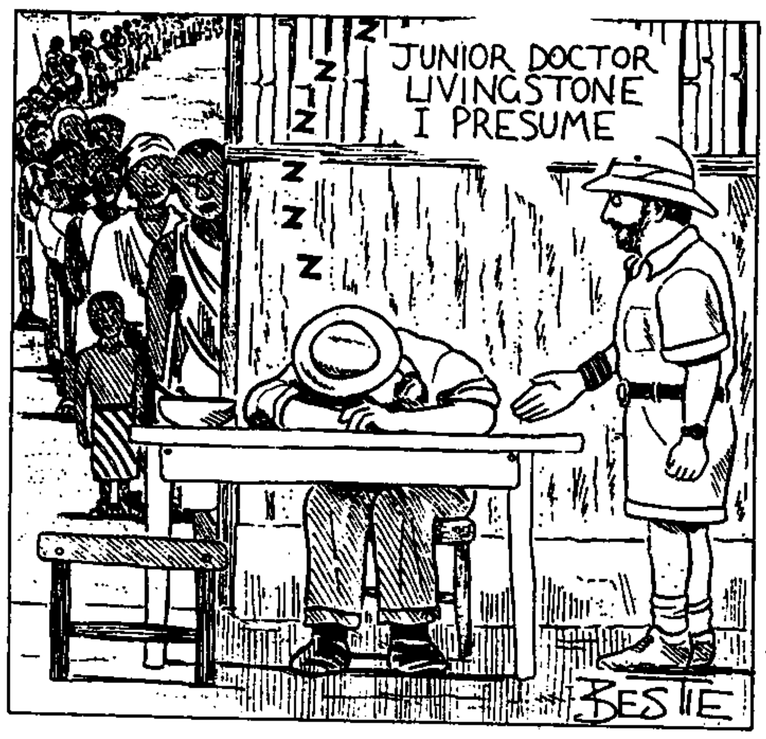
Derek Caldwell, chief executive of **Stockport acute services trust**, later admitted that there had been a fully-equipped empty bed on the intensive therapy unit, but no one to staff it. "Since August, the fourth ITU bed has been closed more days than open because of staff off sick or on leave."

January also saw the death of Roberta Gerardo who suffered a brain haemorrhage but couldn't be given an ITU bed at **North Middlesex hospital, Chase Farm hospital** or indeed any other hospital in London. Eight hours later, a bed was found in **Hemel Hempstead**. She died shortly after arrival. Last year Albert Pearson died on transfer from Chase Farm to Hemel Hempstead hospital after a six-hour search for an ITU bed.

● **WANSBECK's** £30 million showpiece general hospital is allegedly "the most modern in Europe." So modern that former PoW Leslie Bye and three other elderly patients were nursed on an unstaffed, unheated side ward and served meals on paper plates. As Mr Bye explained: "The emergency call buttons didn't work so they gave us a handbell and wedged the fire door open so the nurses on the next ward could see us."

● **QUEEN'S medical centre** in **Nottingham** has converted an acute medical ward into an admissions ward to take overspill from casualty and prevent unsightly trolley loitering.

The aim is "for no patient to remain there for more than 24 hours before transfer to the speciality they need". The reality, as one member of staff said, is that "a medical ward where patients could get the treatment they needed has been transformed into a transit camp for disorientated patients and relatives wondering desperately when their treatment will commence. Recently 17 patients were camping for one bed..."



Meanwhile at **Birmingham's Good Hope hospital**, casualty nurses have threatened to strike because of "overwork caused by dangerously low staffing levels".

● THE **National Blood Transfusion Service** (now expensively renamed the National Blood Service as the word "transfusion" was deemed to put off potential donors) is ploughing ahead with its nationwide closures of transfusion centres (sorry, blood centres) with the loss of 1,100 jobs and many more donors.

However, the NBS has hatched a cunning plan to attract more donors by teaming it up with the, er, **Californian Prune Roadshow**. As a memo from NBS's Sue Cunningham says: "Please could you let us know as soon as possible whether you have any sessions near National Prune week venues. There will be photocalls and other publicity linked to the roadshow and donors will be offered prunes to eat after they have given blood." Now there's an incentive...

● **FIFE health board** is offering GP practices £500 to develop their own patient's charter. Dr Gavin McBurne, FHB's director of primary care, has kindly suggested some standards that participating practices might wish to include: "Your family doctor will treat you as a person and not just as a medical case"; and "Your doctor will try to help you get the best possible care from the rest of the health service." How much money will be wasted spelling out such obvious ethical standards is unclear.

● TWENTY-TWO NHS trusts in England made losses in 1994 and more than 50 are running a cumulative deficit. Lurking near the bottom with a deficit of £1 million is **London's Royal Throat, Nose and Ear hospital**, which boasts on every letterhead "The most successful NHS trust in the country".

● OF THE 10 students who failed their final clinical examinations at **Manchester medical school** last year, just 10 (100 percent) had Asian surnames. As senior lecturer Aneez Esmail explained: "There were no such failures in the written exams. These were not substandard students — if anything, they are likely to have been above average."

● GPs piloting a £14 million total fundholding scheme in **Bromsgrove** are pulling out because of the 25 hours a week they're spending on meetings and paperwork. And in **Walton-on-Naze (Essex)**, a fundholding practice has postponed 50 operations because of a £250,000 overspend. Senior partner Dr Jonathan Gelgard explained: "We negotiated a very good contract with Essex rivers healthcare trust in the first year, but then they raised prices by 27 percent. The nearest other hospitals are 40 miles away and our elderly patients have difficulty travelling that far..."

● **BRECKNOCK** borough councillor Aileen Dixon, a GP receptionist, has applied to the Welsh Office for permission to speak and vote on health matters. The WO has responded by demanding to know her political affiliations. Mrs Dixon is not amused.

● **NORTHWICK Park NHS trust** has a new £5,000 a year board member, BUPA employee Liz Owens. The trust also has an extensive private wing but chief executive Michael Cole denies any conflict of interest. "Ms Owens has been taken on for her expertise in information technology." Oh really?

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

OF THE many specialist cheeses produced in the UK, the world-famous Lanark Blue must be one of the best. Described as "Scotland's Roquefort", it is produced on a windswept farm 1,000 feet above sea level overlooking the valley of the upper Clyde.

Just before Christmas, however, Clydesdale council's health gestapo (ie its environmental health officers) forced a recall of the whole stock after claiming that it was infected with the dreaded listeria bacteria, which indeed it was.

It took until last week for them to come up with a plan to test the last remaining stock in the world. And this was after they had seized the cheese, worth some £54,000 in retail value, and tried to convince a bemused justice of the peace that she should condemn the whole lot and allow the ever-vigilant EHOs to destroy it.

In their enthusiasm to wipe out another food business — and that is what would have been achieved — the EHOs had neglected a very minor detail. Despite the "killer" reputation of listeria, not all strains cause illness and the one found by the EHOs was one which didn't. Only due to the good sense of the female JP (Scotland's magistrate-equivalent) was the cheese saved.

But Clydesdale EHOs now plan to test some 75 batches and are still intent on seeking their destruction if more than 1,000 listeria are found in any gram sample. Protests that even many millions of the strain of listeria bacteria found would be harmless have so far fallen on deaf ears. And even a food safety expert, eager to tell food minister Angela Browning about the impending demise of yet another rural craft industry, was turned away from Whitehall Place — home of the Maffia — dismissed as a "paid lobbyist".

THE FATE of Lanark Blue has caused ripples of alarm throughout the whole cheese industry. While a soft cheese may currently contain up to 1,000 listeria bacteria per gram before it is considered unfit, that will change after April when regulations are introduced implementing EC directive 92/46 on milk hygiene, extending the common agricultural policy (CAP).

Buried in the regulations is a new standard for listeria in cheese, setting a new level which amounts to er... none at all, before cheese must be destroyed. Since listeria is found almost everywhere in the environment and is commonly found in cheeses — without doing one whit of harm — specialist cheesemakers are convinced they will be unable to produce any more cheese once the regulations are enforced.

The ministry of agriculture, aka the Maffia, despite Browning's lack of enthusiasm, is aware of the problem and its potential effect on a valuable and prestigious industry. But it claims to be powerless to act as it is "duty bound" to implement EC law. So cheesemakers are set to be the latest victims of the CAP — which aims to "ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community" and "ensure the availability of supplies".

THE better-known victims of the increasingly insane *acquis communautaire*, the meat industry, are spitting blood and feathers. After learning that the Maffia is planning to shut down at least another 100 slaughterhouses (*Eye* 863), abattoir owners have learnt that the Irish government is to give up to £120,000 in grants to its slaughterhouses to enable them to comply with the new EC standards.

Thus while the UK government has been adding to the EC law and making compliance far more expensive and difficult than it need be (with the clear intention of shutting down as many slaughterhouses as it can get away with) the Irish are bending over backwards to help out their own industry.

Even EC officials are watching the destructive tendencies of our own dear Maffia officials in amazement.

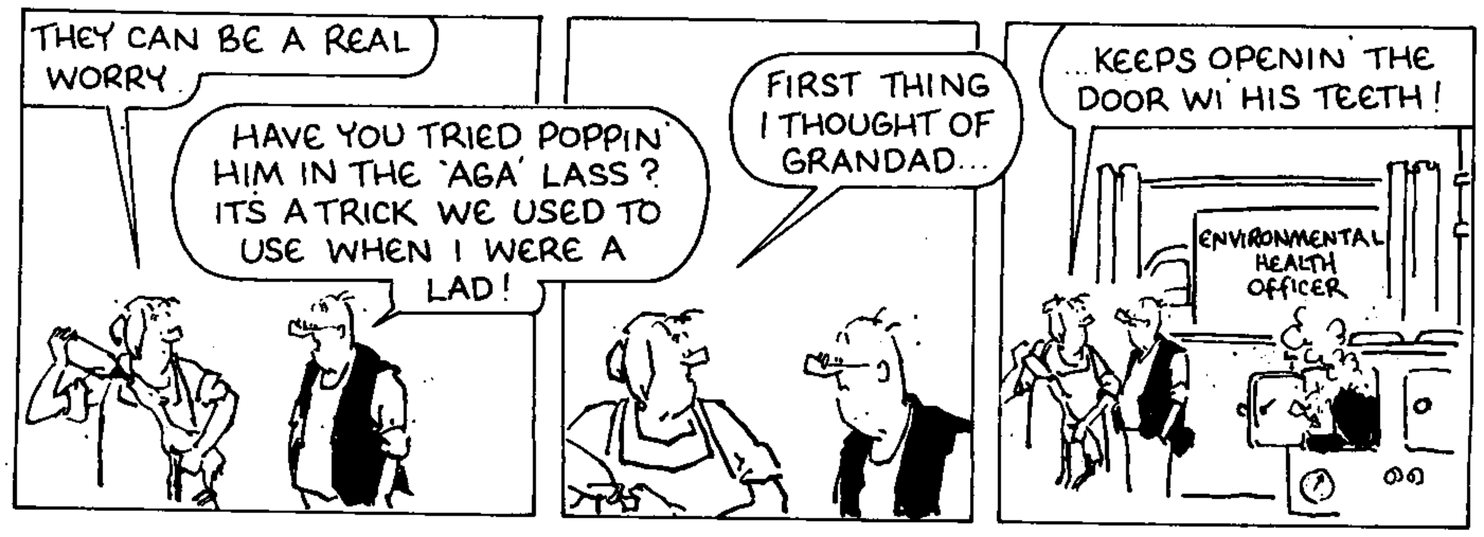
Meanwhile Angela Browning defends the British version of the level playing field by claiming that "the government is committed to keep regulation in the fresh meat sector to the minimum possible, while maintaining essential standards of food safety and consumer protection".

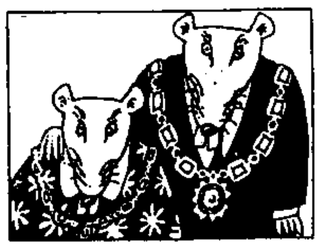
To quote that well-known Europhile Teresa Gorman — bunkum! She notes how the minister "pays the usual lip service to reducing burdens on business" and then goes on to tell her why the Maffia must add to them.

'New Muckspreader'

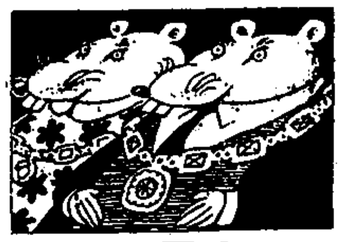
Old Macdonald

ALBERT


THEY CAN BE A REAL WORRY
HAVE YOU TRIED POPPIN' HIM IN THE 'AGA' LASS? ITS A TRICK WE USED TO USE WHEN I WERE A LAD!
FIRST THING I THOUGHT OF GRANDAD...
...KEEPS OPENIN' THE DOOR WI' HIS TEETH!
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER



THE Rotten Borough Advertiser



NO ONE SACKED

WHAT do the big city councils do when they suspect their senior officers might not be giving value for money? Er, not much.

Take Liverpool, which with already the highest council tax in the country is raising it by 15 percent so that band E payers will receive £1,000-plus bills in April.

Given the city's inability to deliver the most basic council services efficiently, the rise seems a bit cheeky. Servicing a £774 million debt (larger than that of the island state of Mauritius) can't help; but eyes have turned to the performance of chief executive Peter Bounds, who has presided over the disaster of city funds and resources for more than five years now.

While rumours surfaced last month (*Eye* 863) that Bounds's job was on the line because of his failure to get to grips with the council's shambolic Direct Services Organisation, senior councillors passed up the opportunity to sack him.

So Bounds has been let off... but only if he concentrates on his day job and gives up all his outside quango posts!

Thus the poor man must relinquish his chairmanship of Liverpool City Challenge, and give up posts as education adviser for the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, director of the Liverpool Philharmonic, and fellow of Bolton Institute for Higher Education. British public life will never be the same again.

Bounds emerged from the meeting which decided his future in Uriah Heep mode: ever so 'umble — and still enjoying a £100,000 salary for another year. He thanked councillors for "the great honour" of allowing him to serve the people of Liverpool; and as he did so 250 more lowly-paid council workers facing imminent redundancy were heard to be passing round the sick bag.

In Birmingham, meanwhile, disciplinary action against a senior council officer can be a prelude to one of the most lucrative phases in that officer's career: ask wimmin's unit boss Nancy Johnson.

Johnson was sacked as chairman of the black-led Harambee Housing Association after it ran up losses of nearly £250,000 (Harambee is about to be dissolved by the Housing Corporation, the first British housing association to meet such a fate). But the city council investigated her after the *Eye* revealed financial discrepancies in the accounts of the bizarre annual wimmin's festival — including what seemed to be payments for events that had never happened.

The inquiry was announced 18 months ago but didn't start until 14 months later. It has been sitting, on and off, for the last four months. What explains the bizarre delays?

Two events may be significant. The first is Johnson's birthday. She recently turned 50 — and so suddenly became eligible for a suitably enhanced local authority pension! Second, her contract has come to an end — which means she's entitled to the statutory three months' salary as a pay-off, worth £11,000.

PS: The councillor chairing Johnson's disciplinary tribunal is Mick Rice. Mr Rice is under investigation over the small matter of the alleged disappearance of nearly £100,000 of council grants into the Birmingham Trades Union Resource Centre and Trades Union Club.

IRISH FIASCO

QUESTION: How much did it cost to refurbish the Irish Centre at Queen's Park in Bent? Answer: Depends whom you ask.

Inspector Knacker and VAT investigators from customs and excise are looking into allegations of corruption at the centre, which was set up with the help of former GLC leader Ken Livingstone (now the Bent East MP) in 1983.

When the centre was recently refurbished the work was estimated at £231,000. Bent council duly handed over £137,000 of public money, no questions asked, leaving the club to pay its share of £94,000. But life in Bent isn't as simple as that...

Workmen were supposed to install a lift, library and changing rooms, but demolished a recently built fitted kitchen instead and put in a new bar. Not only that, but according to the centre's company secretary, Brendan Mulkere, the final bill came in at just over £205,000. One might assume the council was due a refund — but no money has been returned.

Meanwhile Ken Livingstone has made some serious allegations about Mulkere. According to the MP, he wangled personal loans out of the contractors and repaid them using Bent Irish Community Association money.

However, the council's Tory leadership changed the rules governing the granting of council funds and allowed progress reports on them to be made personally to council leader Bob Blackman, thus by-passing the management committee. When management committee members objected to what was happening at the Irish Centre they were expelled from the committee and replaced with Mulkere yes-men.

Livingstone recently used the cover of parliamentary privilege to denounce Mulkere as a "crook". He said: "In the 25 years I have been an elected representative I have never been more certain of any sentence I have uttered."

By way of defence, Bent Tories claim that allegations against Tory-backed Mulkere have been fabricated by Labour supporters of the toppled regime at the Irish centre. Interestingly enough, last St Patrick's Day Blackman announced — from the floor of the centre — that a useful £70,000 grant was on its way. The fact that elections were to take place only a few weeks later in ever-marginal Bent, with its vociferous Irish vote, was coincidental.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

DELYN: When a Labour member of the borough council suggested putting smart new gondolas on local mill ponds to attract tourists to a heritage park in the ravaged post-industrial Greenfield Valley, near Holywell, Clwyd, there was only one problem. As a fellow New Labour councillor said: "That might sound OK in theory, but who's going to feed these gondolas?"

IN BRIEF

MANCHESTER: When the Labour-run city council invited companies to compete for the chance to redevelop Hulme, a prison camp of deck-access flats and concrete walkways south-west of the city centre, Hulme Regeneration Limited, the development group in charge, rejected the Miller Partnership, Bovis and a group called Inner City Enterprises. It plumped for AMEC. Coincidentally Hulme Regeneration Limited is a partnership between Manchester city council and, er, AMEC.

ISLINGTON: London's most PC borough lost £50,000 staging last summer's exciting Viva South Africa festival. Councillors thought South African airlines were paying to bring the performers over, but the deal collapsed and the council had to pay the air fares of 80 artistes from Jo'burg. Fewer than 10,000 punters then turned up, estimates of safety costs were too low and a profit-sharing deal with a private promoter was declared unlawful, leaving astute Islington with all the losses.

CALDERDALE: Rightly or wrongly, people living near the council-run Close Lea children's home at Rastrick have long blamed it for break-ins and other local crimes. Imagine the council's embarrassment when five charges were arrested in the middle of the night following a series of, er, burglaries. How had the three boys and two girls got out? A duty officer had let them out after they said they wanted to go shopping — at midnight.

LAMBETH: INTERIM chief executive Sari Conway has changed her tune since claiming the *Eye* story about a council porn-ring inquiry was wrong and that there had been no cover-up. She now says the inquiry made 24 recommendations, none of which has been implemented (not a cover-up, *shurely*?), and wants to know why an officer was not disciplined for gross misconduct but got a £50,000 medical retirement cheque instead.

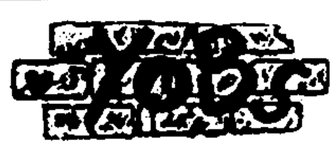
Keith Simpson — An Apology

IN OUR issue of 9 September we published an article concerning Mr Keith Simpson, the assistant director of technical and environmental services at Islington council, which suggested that he had "sacked" half the direct labour stewards committee on unlawful grounds and that Mr Simpson had lied about his health by failing to disclose a serious medical condition.

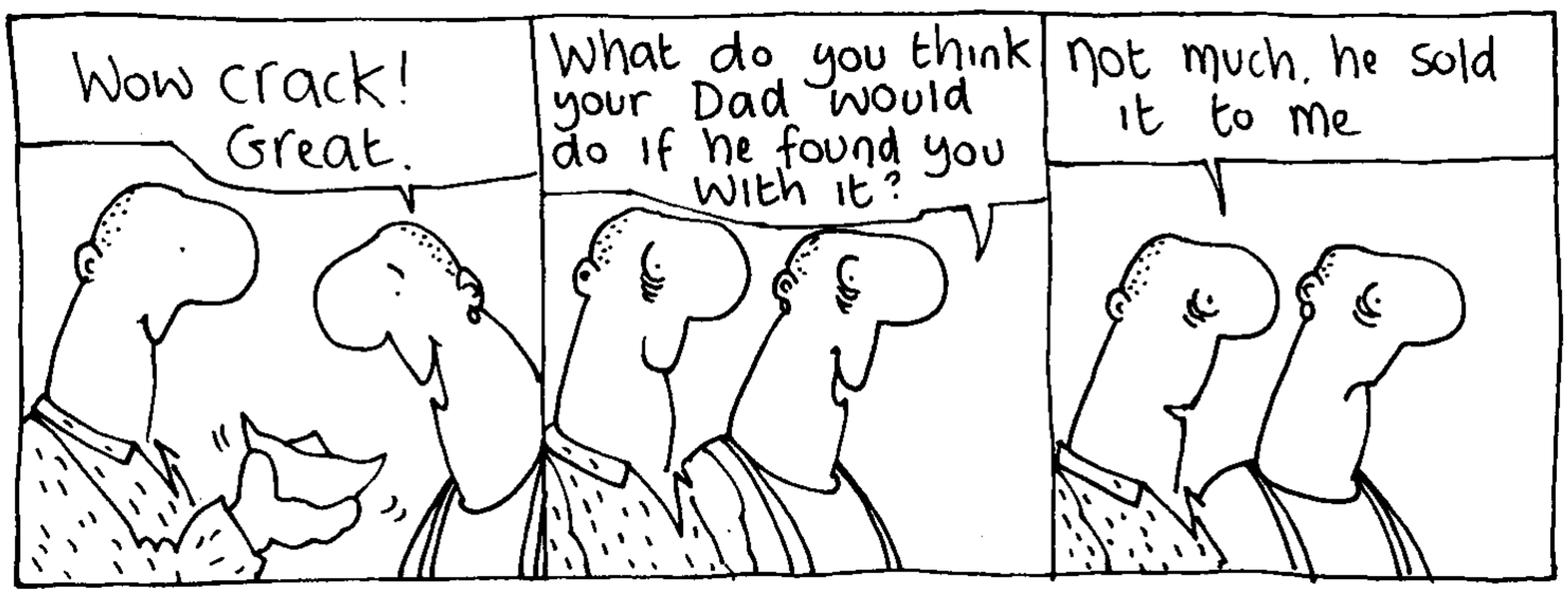
We now accept that both these allegations are untrue. The stewards were made redundant lawfully and Mr Simpson did not lie about his medical condition, which he only discovered a year after joining Islington council.

We wish to take this opportunity to withdraw our unfounded allegations and apologise to Mr Simpson and his family for any distress and upset which our article has caused them.

against and 319 for, Labour leader Tory Blair *Hindustan Times*



HUSBAND



"Why, Miss Jones, you're beautiful when you're managing your anger"

ELECTRICITY NEWS

BAD news for the two big private electricity generators, National Power and PowerGen.

PowerGen has attracted particularly bad publicity over the £5.3 million share windfall which was shared between as many as, er, just six of its top staff.

Meanwhile Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, is trying to make amends for his failure in the past to do anything about the dominance of the duopoly.

He should have referred them to the monopolies commission a year ago, but he backed down to keep the treasury happy. The treasury owns 40 per cent of the shares which it wants to sell; and if Littlechild had asked the commission to investigate the sale would have been delayed because no one would buy shares in companies facing such a threat.

Instead Littlechild told them to sell off some of their power stations to reduce their dominance. This kept the government quiet and three months later Littlechild received his reward: his contract was renewed for five years. However, as forecast in the *Eye*, the generators have sold nothing. They do not want to sell their profitable stations and no one will buy the rubbish. Littlechild has thus resumed his belated offensive.

He has threatened to allow the generator's deadly enemies, the regional electricity companies, to generate more electricity themselves and thus threaten the generators' hold on the market. This has created fury at the treasury, which is trying to flog its shares to raise £4 billion (handy for pre-election tax cuts). It would be outrageous to suggest that Littlechild's tougher attitude has been influenced by the fact that, with the renewal of his contract, his job is secure until 1995.

This is just one aspect of the havoc raging inside the privatised industry. Trafalgar House, which once bought the *Daily Express* to give its chief executive something to do, is bidding £1.2 billion for Northern Electric, a bid that is being referred to the monopolies commission.

Littlechild, as a fanatical marketeer, believes, as a previous prime minister put it, that you can't buck the market. His problem is how to stop the market selling to the highest bidder; and if Trafalgar House does get Northern there will be nothing to stop others buying up the other regional electricity companies. They could fall into the hands of, say, a Robert Maxwell; or they could go bankrupt; or they could find they have an absentee owner who lives somewhere in Turkish Cyprus. And then who would keep the lights burning?

O·B·N

Michael Barrymore has reached a level of excellence and brilliance, and by a power somewhere between the miraculous and the supernatural, just keeps getting better and better.

Barrymore is now so far ahead of his contemporaries, they must lie in bed at night, tortured with second ratedness.

They must feel like poor old Salieri, the inferior composer whose own musical light was snuffed out overnight when his brilliant rival Mozart appeared on the scene.

JACI STEPHEN
Daily Mirror

Submitted by Tom Owens.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Letters

Private Eye

Old guard

Sir,

We have not withdrawn financial support from our local gas pensioners' branch. Nor, for that matter, are we withdrawing free services for older and disabled customers.

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS WARR,
Area Communications Officer (Cardiff), British Gas.

Under fire

Sir,

In an article in one of your recent editions headed "Fire News" you assert, and I quote, "those in charge of south London's firefighters are set to award themselves big pay rises while those at the bottom of the ladder are rewarded with a pay-cut".

Firstly, there is no such thing as a South London Fire Brigade. The London Fire Brigade covers the whole of the greater London area formerly covered by the Greater London Council and any recommendations apply to the whole of that area.

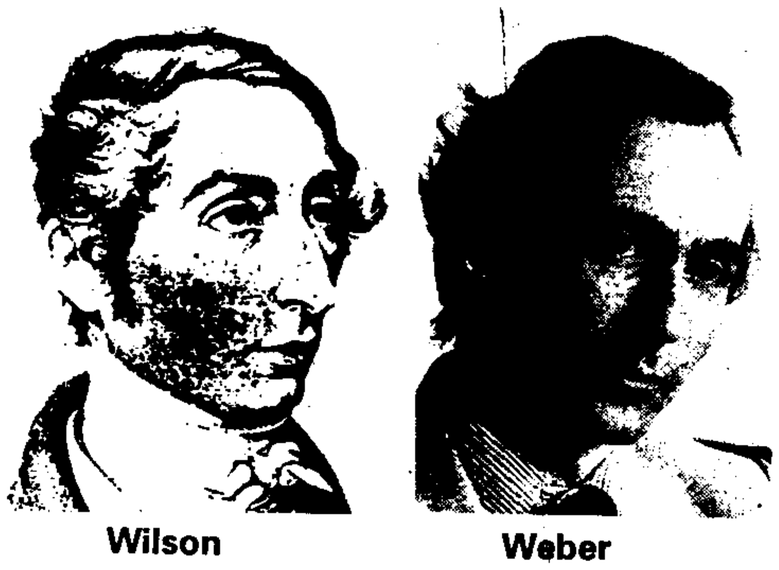
Secondly, the London Fire Brigade is governed by the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority (LFCDA), which is an organisation which forms part of local government, run by democratically elected councillors nominated by the individual boroughs in London. No senior fire officers are allowed to award themselves a pay increase, and like all other local government officers they are accountable to the elected members in their authority.

Thirdly, whilst it is true that in the recent major reorganisation report presented to the authority by the corporate management board there were recommendations both to reduce the number of senior officers in the brigade and at the same time increase the salary of those who remained, this was rejected by members when they considered that report at a meeting as long ago as the middle of December.

Fourthly, no one in the LFCDA will receive now or in the future a pay cut. Whilst there have been some alterations to the grades of some support staff there is a remit that we have had with our trade unions for many years that enables those whose grade is reduced to retain the salary from their original grade until their new grade's salary catches up.

Yours sincerely,
TONY RITCHIE,
Leader LFCDA.

Lookalike



Wilson **Weber**

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed, as I have, the startling resemblance between noted man of letters A.N. Wilson and the 19th-century German composer Claus Maria von Weber. I wonder if they could possibly be related?

Yours faithfully,
ENA B. INGRAMS,
London.

Divested

Sir,

With reference to a great man and friend on p9 of the current EYE *(appended below) — could his appearance wearing just that vest be in any way related to vandalism of his wardrobe by an earlier "Asian Babe"?*

Yours faithfully,
H.S. READER,
Weston-Super-Mare, Avon.

Nether regions

Sir,

Square Eyes considers the BBC's TEARS BEFORE BEDTIME *to be aimed at yuppie parents living in London with nobody in any other region finding it worth watching.*

The TV critic's "Sunday Choice" from the SHEFFIELD STAR *is enclosed for your interest. He recommends the programme for — "the bedhopping antics of all and sundry is enough to keep you firmly perched on the edge of your seat", "cross between a* THIRTYSOMETHING *set in Hampstead and a Dennis Potter thriller: "Great viewing, let's hope the Beeb plans a second series".*

Personally I thought it was crap so I went to the whippet racing, then down the Pig & Ballbearing for a few sherbets.

Regards,
JIM FULTON,
Sheffield.

Not nice

Sir,

As much as I enjoy Square Eyes every fortnight, I must object to his assumption that the supernatural and horror is solely the domain of slobs or C1s. The horror genre attracts people of both sexes and all sections of society. In fact many enthusiasts I know are extremely erudite and perceptive folk, as opposed to "tasteful people" who describe everything as "nice".

As for the BBC's GHOSTS, *it might have been a tall tale but I found it more entertaining than most of the recent crop of fantasy eg* THE BLUE BOY *and endless kidvid shows.*

Yours faithfully,
GARETH PRESTON,
via e-mail.

Moral issue

Sir,

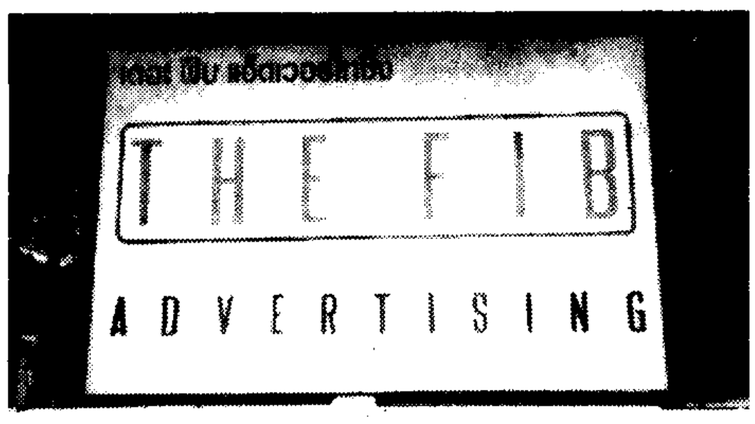
I was amused to note that after your vilification of Dr Vernon Coleman throughout 1994 you are now carrying advertisements for his books.

Can we assume that the attacks are now to cease, or is it simply that you have no morals?

Yours,
ANGELA HARRISON,
Humberside.

Please address letters for publication to Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or e-mail to strobes@cix.compulink.co.uk (marked "For Publication").

I-SPY *Bangkok*



Submitted by Joe Austin. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Sunk without trace

Sir,

Oh come now, possums. The EYE *all politically correct? I refer to Quake Watch (p9).*

We hacks all know that one Yorkshireman not drowned in a monsoon is more newsworthy in Britain and especially Yorkshire than thousands drowned. This is not racism, as is frequently alleged, but based on the probability that even if a full list of drowned foreigners was printed, we Brits would recognise none of them. The Yorkshireman, on the other hand, will have local friends and relatives interested in reading about his fate.

Yours sincerely,
VALERIE GROSVENOR-MYER,
Haddenham, Cambridge.

Disaster fund

Sir,

Your "Quake Watch" correspondent must have missed the EVENING STANDARD *Business Day supplement (Wednesday 18 January 1995) heading: "Quake could aid Japanese economy". Well that's all right, then!*

Yours sincerely,
CLIFF MOORE,
Harlow, Essex.

Cont. man

Sir,

*How can Evi Nosirahk (*EYE *864) who claims to be able "to grasp the idioms of European satire" make a mistake like the one described?*

Oh, of course, I understand. I recall buying a copy of DER STURMER *in Germany of the 1930s, and was puzzled to see how many stories ended "cont. on page vier und neunzig". I took it to my newsagent and complained. He politely pointed out that I was a stupid twat on whom comedy was wasted. I pass on my wisdom to Evi.*

Yours,
E. CREES,
Warley, West Midlands.

PS: How can the man who gave us BEYOND THE FRINGE, BEDAZZLED *and* DEREK AND CLIVE *be overrated?*

PPS: Esther Rantzen is *over-rated (at least where this Evi sort comes from).*

Under Cooked

Sir,

*Having read Evi Nosirahk's letter (*EYE *864), I would ask whether someone who needs to ask their newsagent to explain the meaning of "contd p94" is qualified to make any sort of statement about Peter Cook being "overrated"?*

Yours,
CHRIS HERBERT,
via e-mail.

Gentleman's agreement

Sir,

If James Martin has only cut his "crossword" teeth on downmarket rags like the TELEGRAPH *and* EXPRESS, *he can hardly expect to be able to solve Cyclops in a gentleman's newspaper such as* PRIVATE EYE.

Please do not simplify Cyclops — it is one of the best.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BRISBOURNE,
Dorking, Surrey.

Barking

Sir,

*In his letter (*EYE *864) Mr David Baker asserts that as a gay man, rather than spending an evening with Michael Portillo he would rather curl up with a whoopie cushion. I assume this to be a typographical error, and that Mr Baker's real preference would be a WOOFIE cushion.*

I think we should be told.

Best wishes,
JOHN BALDWIN,
via e-mail.

PS: Some of my best friends are taxi drivers.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"The fallout from the World Cup saw a galaxy of stars land on Planet Premiership."
JOHN MOTSON, BBC
(R. Parsons)

"It has been one of the warmest 1994s this century."
RICHARD ALLINSON, Capital Radio
(Tom Barrow)

"Steve McMahon... born in the shadow of the Mersey..."
ALAN PARRY, Central TV
(Martin Rose)

John Humphries: *So, in one word, don't get rid of the Lottery, do it better!*
Sue Lawley: *That was two words.*
TODAY, Radio 4
(Tony Campion)

"Jonathan Pryce is Jonathan Pryce: he's something else."
LIONEL BART, GLR
(Martin Holmes)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

WE WANT TO DO SOMETHING FOR ANIMALS, CAESAR.
ALL RIGHT, SO YOU SHALL..
..YOU CAN FEED THE LIONS.
ANIMAL RIGHTS
ANIMAL RIGHTS
CIRCUS MAXIMUS

Letter from **Port au Prince**

from Our Own Correspondent

THERE was always going to be a surreal air to an operation that involved the richest country in the hemisphere invading the poorest to restore a left-wing president to power to keep the Caribbean safe for American capitalism.

And visitors to the United States embassy on Harry Truman Boulevard in Haiti will not be disappointed. "Of course, the difference between Haiti and central America is that here we intervened on the side of the people..." one diplomat confided at a recent press briefing.

The handcuffed boat people being "voluntarily" returned from Guantanamo to Port-au-Prince docks, a few yards down the road, may beg to differ. Haiti may be the toughest assignment yet for US reality control now the honeymoon is coming to an end and Haitians start to think about paying the price of Washington's largesse.

Economic adjustment à la IMF will mean price rises and budget cuts; while the freeing of hundreds of rightwing thugs and Washington's refusal to disarm them will mean more violence. Uncle Sam knows it and is off by the end of March; Jean-Bertrand Aristide, now pushing through the rightwing economics he was elected to prevent, will, they hope, be left to pick up the pieces.

In the meantime Haiti serves as a useful laboratory for the Washington social scientists to try to fashion their ideal, post-cold war, third world society. With the US army portraying itself as some sort of development agency with side arms, all kinds of "civil affairs" personnel have been pouring in.

Bankers from Dallas are running (sorry, advising) the ministry of finance; travel agents from Oregon have been posted to tourism; and long-retired police officers have been summoned to restrain the recalcitrant Haitian police. "The silent invasion is following what the GIs called the cool invasion," complains one popular organiser. "They couldn't beat us so they are pretending to join us."

USAID and other agencies are certainly pumping money into the popular movement — the amorphous collection of co-ops, self-help groups and solidarity organisations that did so much to get Jean-Bertrand Aristide elected president and shock Washington in the process.

The democratic experiment that got out of control is now due to get back on the road with strictly controlled elections in April and December this year. But no one is holding their breath. In what looks like a dangerous second chance for the team that couldn't shoot straight, the contract to "organise" the elections and ensure the "right" candidates win has gone to the masters of the 1990 debacle.

On the surface life remains calm; but underneath the country is beginning to heave with aspirations that Aristide shares but cannot address while the *blancs* guard him so diligently in his Persil-white suit. Everyone is marking time: the paramilitaries await the first sign of a waning of commitment; the left awaits its first opportunity to start avenging the victims of three years of military rule; the Americans to hand over the presidential sash to someone more compliant this time next year.

In the meantime Haitians are taking USAID's US$200 million annual budget and feigning compliance. The food, medicine and even the faxes and photocopiers will all come in handy for the next big push against the morally repugnant elite — or MREs, as the Americans have labelled them.

In the short term, at least, the biggest threat to us might just be Jesse Helms and his commitment to eliminate all US foreign aid. Till then *Se gres kochon ki kuit kochon* — it's the fat of the pig that cooks the pig, as we say here.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

"Today's wedding was a lavish affair, and the bride looked radiant in a pink silk dress," Chu Kuo reported on Heilongjiang TV's *Evening News*. "In fact, the whole ceremony went very well, considering that she had been dead for a week."

Speaking from the morgue in Harbin city hospital, Heilongjiang province, Chu described the circumstances leading up to the unorthodox wedding which had just taken place there: "Twenty-five-year-old Ge had been courting Yu for several years, but her

was reluctant to commit himself to marriage. Yu became pregnant, and her family insisted that Ge had to marry her. But a Canadian uncle arranged a job for Ge as a short-order chef for McDonald's in Montreal, so he told Yu that he was ending their relationship. 'If you go abroad and do not marry me, I will kill myself,' his girlfriend warned and, after Ge showed her the airplane ticket to Canada he'd already bought, she swallowed a hundred sleeping pills. 'They are candy,' said Ge as he waved her goodbye. Three hours later she was dead.

"Despite the unfortunate circumstances, her furious family still insisted on a proper marriage, with photographs, music, a conjurer, and hired cars to bring family members to the service. So Ge finally relented, bought a ring, booked the morgue, and married Yu, who remained in her coffin throughout. Ge took her ashes to the Honeymoon Hotel at the Niagara Falls. Her family are now content. *(The Herald [Zimbabwe], 22/6/94. Spotter — Robin Biellik)*

—o—

o DRINKING BEER DURING WORKING HOURS AND ABSENTISM WITHOUT PERMISSION

Reference to the above mentioned subject matter concerned, it has come to my notice that some members of staff do drink beer during working hours, more especially during tea time and lunch time, and also some members of staff do have a tendency of being absent from duty without permission from their supervisors. This happens usually at the end of each month, after everyone has been paid. People have developed a tendency of being sleepery during working hours and finally at the end of the day, they come on work premises very drunk and smelling beer, completely.

So, since this indication has been proven, therefore, some drastic measures would be assured. It might not be really nice, if you can be proven drunk on being absent from duty station without permission. Should you do it deliberately, police officers will be invited silently to come with the equipment detecting beer drinking, and you will be brought before Senior authorities to answer questions. Believe me or not during that time, when sweating, I shall not be with you.

Please stop this insanitary practices at this spur of the moment. I hope you will cope-up with my advise as from now-wards, unless you want to loose your job.

God bless you all. G.G. Monageng, Principal. *(Botswana Polytechnic Internal Newsletter, 29/4/94. Spotter — Private Eye)*

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

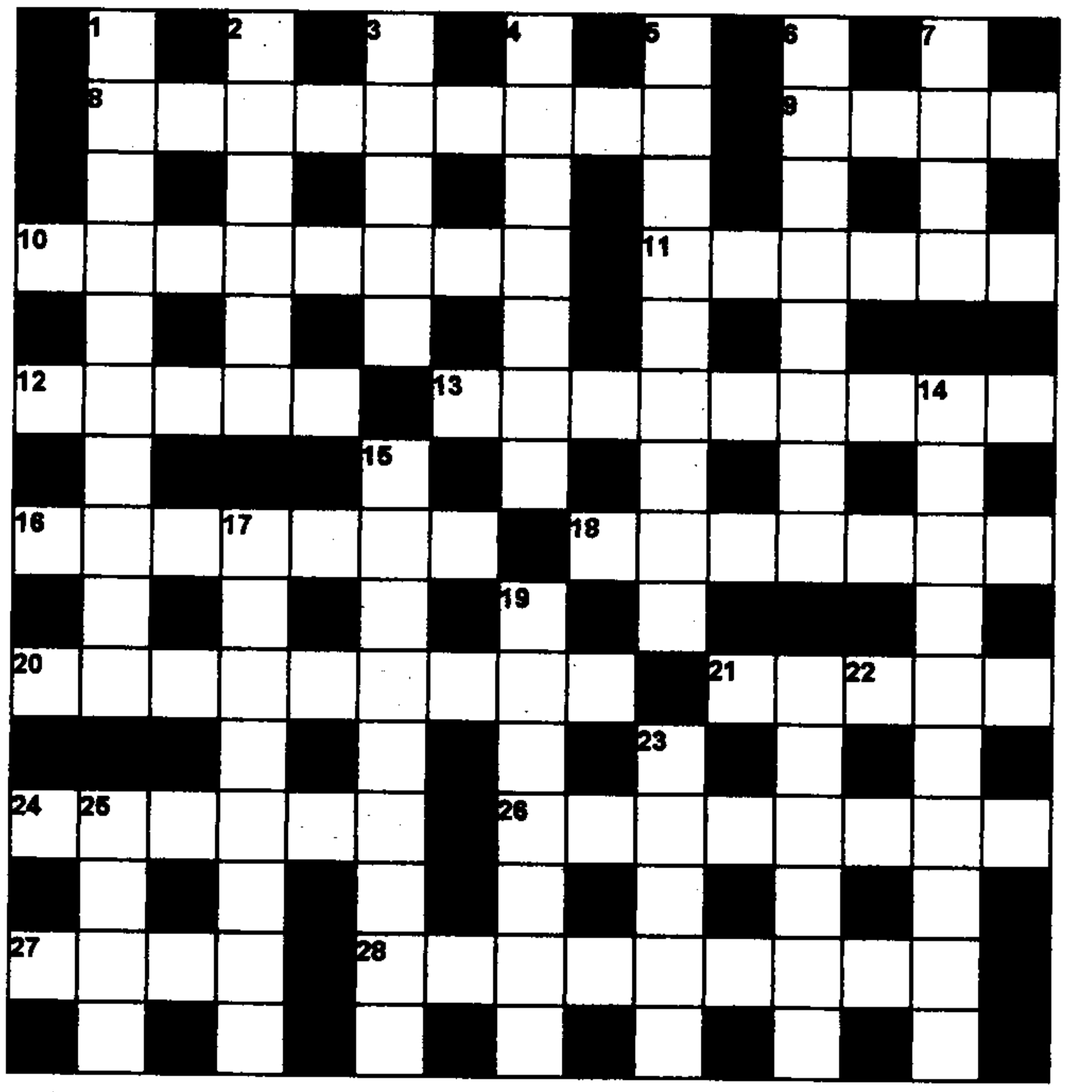
—o—

o *"It all happened so quickly, we can still hardly believe it," shocked worshippers told reporters outside the municipal pool in Larose, Louisiana. "Pastor Davis finished his sermon, stripped down to his bathing suit, shouted 'Prepare for rebirth, ye faithful, and follow me' into his microphone, and stepped into the pool. There was a blinding flash and an almighty explosion, and next thing we saw he was gloating flat on his back, dead, and the microphone had melted. It's just as well no one did follow him."*

The Larose coroners office later confirmed that Michael Davis, pastor of the Larose Christian Fellowship Church, was electrocuted as he entered the pool in which he had intended to baptise a dozen people. Faulty earthing in the microphone lead was to blame." (The Globe & Mail, 30/6/94. Spotter — Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)

EYE CROSSWORD 21 by Cyclops

£100 Winner CHRISTINE CROMIE



ACROSS

8 Provide coaching in the ways of Brussels? That's something of a non-starter (9)
9 (see 27)
10/24 Breakfast-time crap not really intended to be discussed in the house? (5,3,6)
11 One-time PM Di abandoned in such a state (6)
12 (see 23)
13 Dogma distorted problem, it's reported, of troubled capital (9)
16 Soper shilly-shallies about Church status symbol (7)
18 Dirty voting on Tuesday perhaps (7)
20 Regard leak as a small part of our mag (3,6)
21 Brenda's a piece capable of getting around a lot (5)
24 (see 10)
26 14 has a tip for one with a cavalier attitude towards Brenda and co. (8)
27/9 Party allows in seedy Conservative rebel (4,4)
28 ER's opportunity to sack a minister or two? (9)

DOWN

1 Denigrating a famed corrupt politician (10)
2 What fun perhaps for Left to get in charge (6)
3 Analysis: sexually overactive type takes year! (5)
4 Deposed president and rather familiar obstetrician? (4,3)
5 Some finger pointing when it reveals our economic state? (9)
6 As one who opposed Maggie, Mark must have some measure of spirit (8)
7 Paisley lacks consideration for Ireland perhaps (4)
14 Mad animal Stallone swallowing Ecstasy — he's always ready to establish his 'Street' cred (10)
15 Political deception turns of course to railway (9)
17 See Alec piss off when these part-timers appear (8)
19 The hacks get to work to keep down the masses (7)
22 Wonderbra feature for those bound for the top? (6)
23/12 Would-be peace-monger ballsed up navy rescue — English ousted by China's leader (5,5)
25 Announcement about some perisher that's right out of the revolution (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 17.02.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 20

ACROSS: 6/20d Kenneth Clarke 8 Saigon 9 Smalls 10 Monarchy 11 Eyes passim 12 Yobs 13 Atom 15 Tacit 17 Bust 18 Hess 20 Clever dick 22 Panorama 23 On heat 24 Dubcek 25 Yeltsin.

DOWN: 1 Skimpy 2 Uncle Sam 3 Newscast 4 Kilroy 5 Sothebys 7 Home Secretary 8 S and M 14 The Hague 16 The polls 17 Buddhist 19 Smooch 20 (see 6) 21 Chains.

NEWSNIGHT

with Jeremy Paxman

(Pompous music)

Paxman: The Director General of the BBC Mr John Birt has made a dismal speech today suggesting that BBC interviewers are aggressive and rude. I have the little jerk here in the studio.

Birt: Good evening.

Paxman: You're meant to be the Director General, aren't you?

Birt: Er...

Paxman: Oh come on! Either you are or you aren't...

Birt: Well, yes, now you put it like that, I suppose I am.

Paxman: Haven't you got the guts to tell me face to face that you don't like me rather than making some speech in Dublin?

Birt. No. No sir. It's more of a general point I was making.

(Birt adjusts Armani tie nervously)

Paxman: You're pathetic. Get off.

Birt: Thank you very much, Mr Paxman.

Paxman: Next week the University of Toxteth will be taking on Francine Stock.

(Silly music)

"Drop this into Accounts on your way down, would you, Miss Pemberton"

Pass Notes

No 94: Alan Rubbisher

Occupation: New editor of the Guardian.

Appearance: Bespectacled schoolboy. 17 going on 58.

So why him? Good question.

No why, really? Ask me another.

Is he a member of the KGB: No. He's a member of the Garrick.

Not to be confused with: MI5 man James Rusbridger, of fatal auto-erotic accident fame.

But didn't he write a book about sex manuals? No. That was Alan Rusbridger, the new editor of the Guardian.

So what changes can we expect? The Guardian is going to be more reader-friendly.

You mean they're going to fire Ed Pearce and Suzanne Moore... No. He likes them.

So what are his politics? Soft-left. Soft-right. Soft-porn.

You mean: He likes to get tits and bums in between the dreary bits about social workers.

Most likely to say: Let's get Claudia Schiffer on the cover and do a piece about exploitation of women by the media.

Least likely to say: I only got this job because I invented Pass Notes.

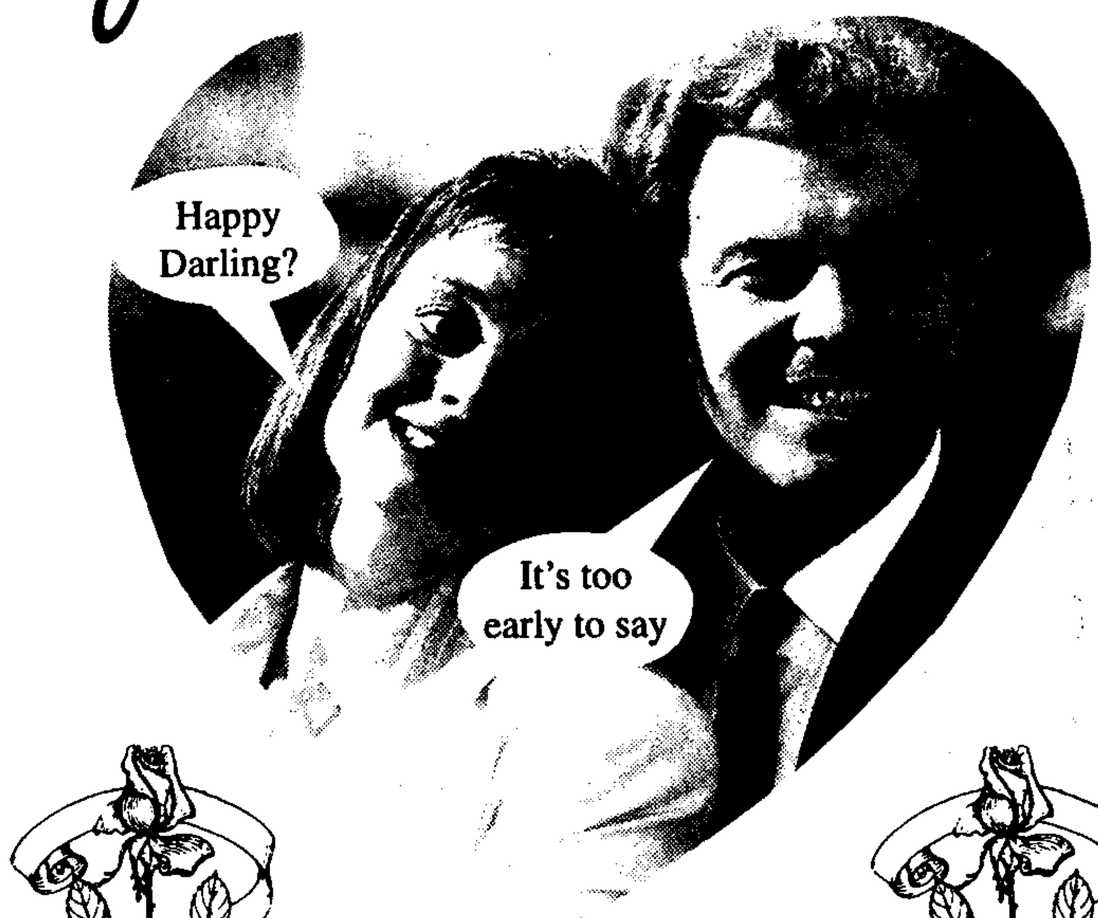
THE ALTERNATIVE VOICE

This week **Dave Spart**, Co-Chair of the Death To Veal Farmers Peace Movement, writes about animal welfare.

Er... the martyrdom of that woman the other day murdered by the police in a totally cynical and calculated manner proves once and for all that there is no alternative to violent protest against the capitalist farming establishment led by arch-fascist William Waldegrave the Goebbels of the Veal Death Squads with his vast estates filled with helpless suffering veal who are sent to their deaths in order to line the pockets of the multinational Veal Barons who are propping up the reactionary dictatorship of Thatcher Reagan Major and the rest of the agro-military complex... er... and the press has typically notably and cynically ignored these legitimate protests in which ordinary people have united in their millions to show solidarity with their fellow veal many of whom are dying in their crates as they are held up at ports by protestors throwing stones and falling under lorries... er... er...

(contd page 94)

Valentine Greetings from the Blairs



Roses are red,
Violets are blue.
So are the Tories,
But Labour are too.
Vote for me.

SHOULD HERO MAX HAVE SHOT HIS MOUTH OFF?

Millions respond to Eye's appeal!

by Our Northern Ireland Staff
Joy Rider

"It was dark, I was confused. I didn't know what was happening, so I blasted away with my paper for three days without thinking. It may have been a mistake. I realise in retrospect that I didn't have a Clegg to stand on." So said honest, bluff soldier Max Hastings as *(contd p. 94)*

ON OTHER PAGES:

- ***A reconstruction of the fateful night when General Sir Napier Gusset had a drink with Hastings and persuaded him to fire off an editorial*** **3**
- *Was Hastings shown the Yellow Card before he let loose his campaign?* **5**
- **The Conrad Black 'n' Tans** **7**
  (That's enough. Ed)

POETRY CORNER

So. Farewell then
Me.

I was sent
Off.

I was so angry
I could have kicked myself.

Instead
I kicked a fan.

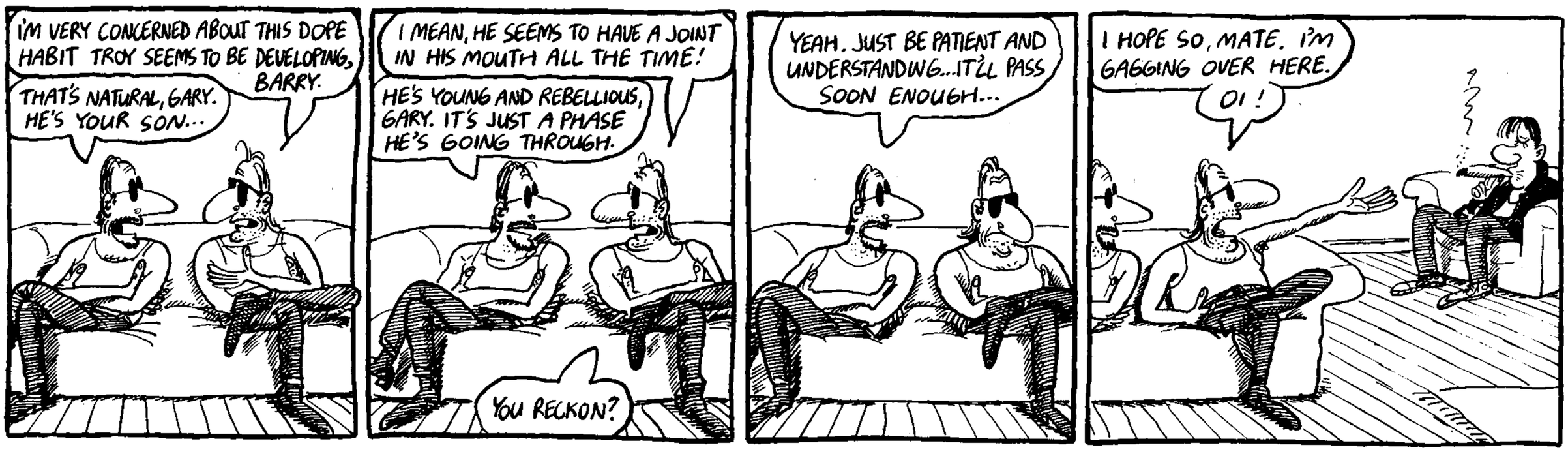
E.J. Cantona (Poet and Footballer)

Great Bores Of Today.

"... I mean basically it's just Gallic temperament he's passionate he's moody he's like Gerard Depardieu in that film same sort of bloke same nose he's like Jean-Paul Sartre in a football shirt you know it's no wonder he lost his rag you only have to go to a match to see the abuse that a player like Eric is subjected to the things they yell at him I'm only surprised he's never done it before but hats off to him it's about time I wouldn't *fine* him no way I'd *give* him three grand to kick some of those morons I mean Eric's a genius he writes poetry he paints he cooks he speaks French and when it comes to football his boots are garlic-flavoured his feet literally do the talking which is why he kicked that bloke in the head the press have turned him into a monster but he's not like that at all he's a cultured bloke he's a renaissance man I mean Albert Camus for example was a goalkeeper and was it Voltaire who played in midfield..."

Celeb

LIGGER


I'M VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THIS DOPE HABIT TROY SEEMS TO BE DEVELOPING, BARRY.
THAT'S NATURAL, GARY. HE'S YOUR SON...
I MEAN, HE SEEMS TO HAVE A JOINT IN HIS MOUTH ALL THE TIME!
HE'S YOUNG AND REBELLIOUS, GARY. IT'S JUST A PHASE HE'S GOING THROUGH.
YOU RECKON?
YEAH. JUST BE PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING...IT'LL PASS SOON ENOUGH...
I HOPE SO, MATE. I'M GAGGING OVER HERE.
OI!

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

Today was a very unhistoric day when we had a routine emergency Cabinet meeting about Europe. Not that there was an emergency, oh no. Nor that we have changed our policy. The policy is what it is always been — e.g. that we should be at the heart of Europe driving in the fast lane. Only this time we have made it very clear that we will be driving in the opposite direction to everyone else. This is because Mr Hanley had read a poll in the Daily Telegraph which was on the same page as his crossword, saying that 92% of the country was now worried by Europe and thought that the Euro-sceptics might have a point. Well, we can be Euro-sceptics too, I said, quick as a flash, only Euro-sceptics at the heart of Europe, being sceptical in the fast lane. For a minute or two the Cabinet was silent, as they thought about my brilliant new policy, which is not new but the same one we have always had. Oh yes. Then Mr Portfolio burst out laughing and said: "Glad you have decided to join us, John. Does that mean we are all bastards now?" Everyone joined in the good-natured spirit of this joke, and shouted "You bastard", pointing at me.

Tuesday

I was not inconsiderably annoyed this morning to hear both Mr Heath and Mr Lord Howe on the radio saying that I was a traitor. How dare they? I have been prime minister for much longer than Mr Heath, and Mr Lord Howe was never even prime minister at all. It takes real leadership to stand up and drive the wrong way in the fast lane, with all your lights flashing. Mr Hurd also was not pleased when one of the rebels said that, now that were all Euro-sceptics, he was "yesterday's man". He immediately went on the television to say that this was quite untrue. He was today's man, and tomorrow's man, and even the day after tomorrow's man. And that he was also a passionate European, whether for or against.

Wednesday a.m.

I was very pleased this morning when the Times printed as its main news item my historic peace plan for Ireland, even though we haven't finished it yet. The article said that I was planning the following initiatives;

1. A joint all-Ireland tourist board, split into two sections, one for the North and the other for the South.
2. A joint all-Ireland Cheese Board, to promote cheeses from both sides of the cheese border in the new European Single-Market.
3. Northern and Southern Ireland to be joined by road and rail links.
4. Members of North and South to speak a common language.
5. Eire...
6. That's it.

Just as I was coming to the end of the article, a small man came bursting through my door and started to scream at me, saying: "It's all up, Major, you're finished." He turned out to be someone called Mr Molyneaux from Northern Ireland. "Ah," I said, remembering who he was. "You are one of the nice MPs who always vote to keep me in office, even though you are not Conservatives." "Not any more, Judas," he said, getting my name wrong rather rudely, "you're on your own now." "What do you mean?" I said. "The deal was," he explained, "that we would only keep you in power so long as you preserve the Union. I tell you, Major, you've got just 24 hours to sort this one out." He stormed out.

Wednesday p.m.

After lunch I rang Mr Hurd to tell him what I was going to do. "What shall I do?" I said. "You've got to go on television and tell everyone to keep calm. I'll get one of our people to send over something for you to read out. The main thing is not to panic." "But surely," I said, "if I go on and say 'Don't panic' everyone will think I am panicking, just like Corporal Jones in Dad's Army." "Dad's Army?" said Mr Hurd, in his typical toffee-nosed way. "What is that?" I had to explain that it was a very popular programme about a hopeless bunch of incompetents who are trying to stop England being taken over by foreigners. They are led by a pompous twit in spectacles who used to work in a bank, who is always having to be told what to do by his upper-class Number Two. "Sounds familiar," said Mr Hurd and rang off.

Thursday

My historic broadcast on Ireland went down very well. For the record, this is what I told the nation:

"Do not panic. This is not an emergency, which is why I am making this emergency broadcast. I appeal to you all to stay calm, as I am doing. Oh yes. There is absolutely nothing to worry about. Try to look calm and reassuring, John, but don't read this bit out".

Obviously my speech was, in my judgement, a great success. When I came out afterwards everyone in the streets was completely calm, and carrying on just as if nothing had happened.

Friday

Mr Molyneaux says that he is no longer my friend and will support Mr Blair instead. This is very silly because Mr Blair agrees with me about Northern Ireland. So this will change nothing — except there will be a General Election. Mr Hanley pointed out in the Cabinet meeting that the Conservative Party has got no money and cannot afford to fight an election anyway.

"Why don't we just concede it?" said Mr Portfolio. "And save the money for the next one, when we will have a leader that people might vote for."

Saturday

The newspapers are trying to make out that the Cabinet are divided over a common European currency. Mr Aitken said: "It will happen over my dead body." Mr Heseltine said: "We should go full steam ahead with the Ecu rather than be left out on the hard shoulder of the slow lane with the hazard lights flashing, waiting for the AA man to come along."

My own position, however, is clear. I agree with both of them. So what is all this talk about a divided Cabinet?

Monday

It seems I had an affair with an older woman when I was young. My brother Terry did not mention this in his book, which just shows how hopeless Terry is at writing books about me. Oh yes.

Fancy Terry claiming that I broke the gnomes and he had to mend them! I did not have time to break gnomes as I was round at No. 27 Burton Road, having tea with my friend Mrs Kierans and showing her my cigarette cards of famous cricketers.

She was very nice and told me that one day I could get to the very top and could even become Branch Manager of a local bank like Mr Mainwaring in the TV series.

RADIO FOUR

The Today Programme

John Humbug: ...So, Jurgen Dirk, you're in charge of the Dutch emergency services. Do you think the dykes are going to hold? Or will the water break through, killing thousands of people?

Dirk: I think not, Mr Humbug. I am glad to say that the water has been going down.

Humbug: Oh. You mean there isn't going to be the worst disaster for 40 years with millions made homeless and massive loss of life?

Dirk: Well, no, at the moment we have everything under control. And...

Humbug: ...well, that's disappointing. Not much of a story over there in Holland.

Anna Fraud: Well, at least someone's died here in England. The veal protester who was run over by a lorry. Mr Cedric Sandal, you're the organiser of BAAA, the Ban All Animal Abuse campaign. Don't you feel you are responsible for this woman's death?

Sandal: Er, well, no, it was a tragic accident. We're all very upset.

Fraud: So you're denying that you killed her. Then perhaps we should blame the police. Superintendent Knacker, you were in charge yesterday. Why didn't you stop this happening?

Knacker: It was a very tragic accident.

Fraud: Oh come on. A woman has just been killed. It's a big story. And surely it's your duty to help us string it out for a few more minutes. I mean, there should be regulations to stop this sort of thing happening.

Knacker: ... er...

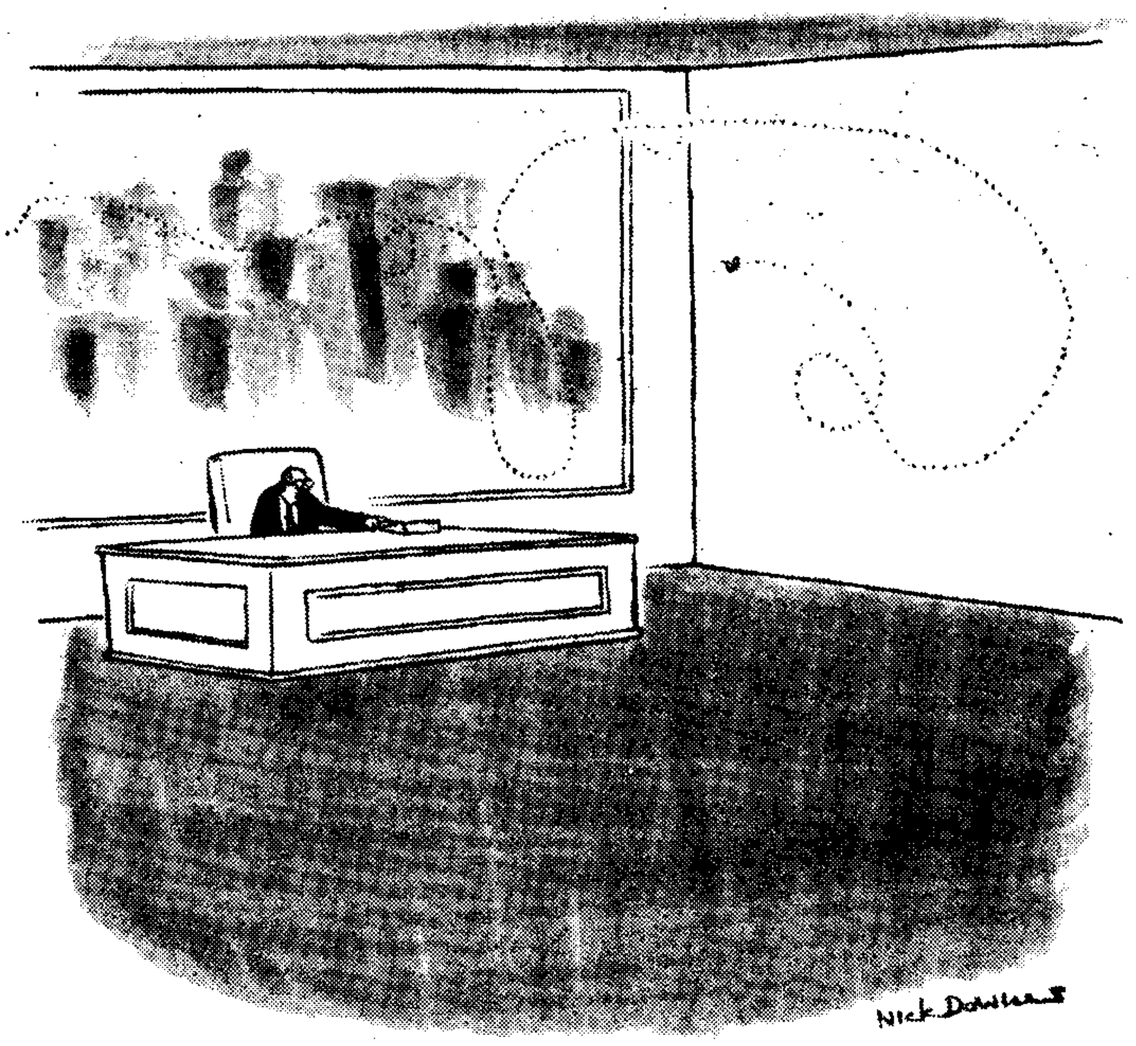
Fraud: Well, that's all we've got time for.

Humbug: And now, Thought For The Day, from the Rev. J.C. Flannel.

Flannel: I was originally going to talk about Eric Cantona. But then the Sikh man did that story yesterday. So then I listened to the news and thought "should it be the awful floods, or should it be the very important question of animal transportation." And then I realised that I could do both, by talking about the story of Noah. He knew what a flood was. And his only response was to herd animals in inhuman conditions in a floating wooden crate. Just imagine what it must have been like for all those poor animals, looking out with their sad eyes...

Humbug: ...thank you, vicar. Now, let's see if we can really stir up some trouble in Northern Ireland, with this new leaked document showing that the British Government is planning to hand over Ulster to Dublin by the end of the year. Ian Paisley, there's going to be blood on the streets, isn't there...

(Contd. every morning on 94 kHz)



"Ms Marsh, call security"

OUT NOW

Hairdressers' Week 95p

incorporating Gel World and Style and Stylists

All the top stories including

CIVIL WAR IN CHECHNYA WORSENS

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS IN CRISIS

ANGLO-IRISH ACCORD FALTERS

SANTER'S FEDERALIST BOMBSHELL

EUROPE REELS UNDER FLOOD DAMAGE

SIERRA LEONE — THE NEXT RWANDA?

Plus p. 94 Diana has new hairdo

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber

THIS IS SOMETHING I'VE DONE TO IMPROVE MY BALANCE!
THE ELLE MACPHERSON WORKOUT
WHAT, STANDING ON ONE LEG?
EL MALPHE WORKOUT
NO, BRINGING OUT A VIDEO— AND ONE....TWO...THREE MILLION DOLLARS !!!...
ELLE MACP WORK
Kerber

DEPUTY Jacqui Huet has asked us to point out that in last week's debate on the proposal to reduce the age of consent for certain homosexual acts, she told the House that she did not believe she had been put on this earth to produce sons 'to be sodomised' and not, as was reported, 'to produce sons who sodomise'

Jersey Evening Post

Nursery Rhyme Times

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 10 1995—2 Chocolate Pennies

Woman claims £200 million after swallowing fly

by Our Legal Staff **Roger Law and Peter Carter Fluck**

AN ELDERLY woman is to sue the government after swallowing a fly which, she claims, led to her suffering from the effects of PFSTS, or "post-fly-swallowing trauma syndrome".

Following a recent ruling of the European Fairy Tale Court, the woman, whose name is not being revealed, is entitled to sue the government for failing to protect her from the harmful effects of fly-swallowing.

One Swallow Makes £200 Million

A leading doctor, who is to appear on behalf of the unnamed woman, described how, as a result of swallowing the fly, his patient had been driven by a compulsion to swallow a succession of increasingly large creatures, culminating in a horse. "She is now very dangerously ill," he said, "through no fault of her own. My prognosis is that she may soon be dead."

Lawyers are keenly watching the outcome of the so-called "fly case", as it could well set a historic precedent which would enable them to earn huge sums of money *(shurely 'to help other victims of injustice'? Ed).*

The London firm of Feigh & Pay have a number of other cases pending. These include:

- **A Miss Muffet, who suffered from Spider-Induced Stress (SIS) after a large arachnid sat down beside her while she was relaxing on a tuffet.**
- **An unnamed cat which was "severely traumatised" by the experience of being put in a well by a boy called Johnny Green, before being rescued by Thomas Stout. The cat, which is suing the local authority that owns the well, claims that it was "disoriented" by the experience and is now "unable to catch mice or purr".**
- **The parents of a baby who left it unattended on the top of a tree are to sue the tree's owners after a bough broke, precipitating the infant to the ground, cradle and all.**

TORY PARTY APPLIES FOR REBEL WHIP

by Our Man In Westminster
Brill O'Pad, Presenter of TV's 'The Brillo Hour'

THE WORLD of Westminter was rocked to its foundations by the news that 309 Conservative MPs, led by Prime Minister John Major, have applied to join the fast-growing, 6-strong new Eurosceptics Party.

Said the entire Cabinet, reading from a prepared script: "It is time to heal the rift and build bridges. We did not want to rebel against the sceptics in the first place. It was all a misunderstanding trumped up by the media."

Said the leader of the Eurosceptics, Mrs Teresa Gormless: "We are happy to accept the 300 back to the fold. But they will have to behave this time and toe the Party line, which is Euro-Euro-Euro, Out-Out-Out..."

Sir Tedswell Taylor is 170.

SHOULD BRITAIN BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PART IN VE-DAY CELEBRATIONS?

by Our Euro-Staff
Ray D. O'Luxembourg

MEPs were last night considering the controversial question of what part, if any, Britain should be allowed to play in this year's celebrations of the 50th anniversary of Victory for Europe Day.

"The perpetrators of the infamous Crimes of Dresden and, er, Dresden, have no place alongside all those brave Germans and Frenchmen who did so much to rid Europe of the Nazi menace," said one MEP, Herr Grossdeutsch.

British MEPs said that "we should respect the feelings of our European partners on this very sensitive issue. It is too early to expect the Germans to forgive us for having declared war on them in 1939."

Lord Howe-Howe is 86.

THE TIMES

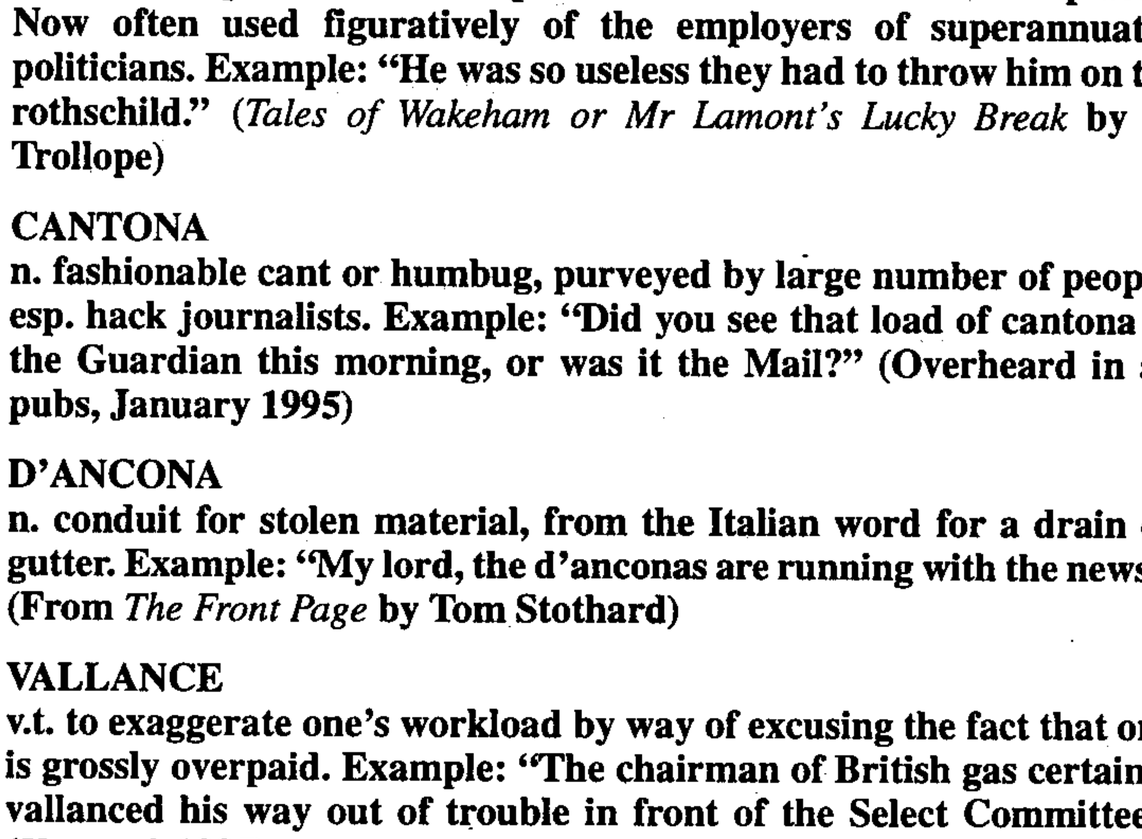
NEW WORDS

ROTHSCHILD
n. form of tip or rubbish heap on which unwanted items are placed. Now often used figuratively of the employers of superannuated politicians. Example: "He was so useless they had to throw him on the rothschild." (*Tales of Wakeham or Mr Lamont's Lucky Break* **by A. Trollope)**

CANTONA
n. fashionable cant or humbug, purveyed by large number of people, esp. hack journalists. Example: "Did you see that load of cantona in the Guardian this morning, or was it the Mail?" (Overheard in all pubs, January 1995)

D'ANCONA
n. conduit for stolen material, from the Italian word for a drain or gutter. Example: "My lord, the d'anconas are running with the news." (From *The Front Page* **by Tom Stothard)**

VALLANCE
v.t. to exaggerate one's workload by way of excusing the fact that one is grossly overpaid. Example: "The chairman of British gas certainly vallanced his way out of trouble in front of the Select Committee." (*Hansard*, **1995)**



"One has to make allowances for genius"

One of the lesser-known cults – The Kazoonies

TERRY WARREN, a Rhyl FC committee member, is the first winner of the new Welsh football pools and picked up a £225 cheque.

Mr Warren, a British Aerospace worker, says the win "will not change his lifestyle".

Daily Post

O'REILLY—On Jan. 3, 1985, to CAMILLA (née Ashforth) and CHARLES, a daughter (Dido Venetia Ashforth), a sister for Cosmo and Dante.

Daily Telegraph

TALL single mum, 40, likes cinema, music, eating out, drives, looking for a decent, working class gut, 40-48 for possible long term relationship.

Glasgow Evening Times

ADVERTISEMENT

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The Wealth-Giving Tonic

Manufactured by Lord Mackay of Cashearn!

LEGALADE

THOSE BRITISH FILM AWARDS IN FULL

Triumph for British Film

By Our British Film Staff
Union Jack Tinker

BRITISH films swept the board last night at the prestigious 1995 British Film Awards Ceremony held at BFA House in London's fashionable Teddington Lock.

Out of a huge field of one film, British films won every one of 27 categories including "Best British Film", "Best British Comedy Film", "Best Film with Hugh Grant in it" and "Best Film called Four Weddings And A Funeral".

Accepting all 27 awards on behalf of himself, Hugh Grant delighted his audience with a typically modest, humorous, self-deprecating... floppy hair... Liz Hurley... public school... *(take in previous pieces)*... contd. p.94.

TV Highlights *BBC*

CASUALTY

(Dramatic music. Men in suits burst through hospital double doors wheeling computer on a trolley)

Distraught woman: Oh my God! It's Barts!

1st Man in Suit: All right! I'll take over. Now what's the problem?

2nd Man in Suit: Nothing. It seems to be functioning healthily.

1st Man in Suit: Damn! Is it too late to save it?

2nd Man in Suit: The hospital?

1st Man in Suit: No. Money, you bloody fool!

(More dramatic music. Cut to Man in Suit staring at computer screen.)

1st Man in Suit: I'm going in...right into the heart of accounts. Jesus! Look at that!

2nd Man in Suit: It's haemorrhaging cash by the bucket!

1st Man in Suit: Yes, that casualty department is making no profit at all. It's almost unbelievable.

2nd Man in Suit: I'd remove it at once, sir.

(Even more dramatic music as 1st Man in Suit punches computer keys)

1st Man in Suit: I'm cutting down to the bone now!

2nd Man in Suit: Brilliant sir! You've staunched the flow and stitched up the staff. It's turning round!

1st Man in Suit: I'm done. Close it up and finish it off, will you?

2nd Man in Suit: It's a privilege working with you sir.

(Distraught woman enters through doors)

1st Man in Suit: What is it this time?

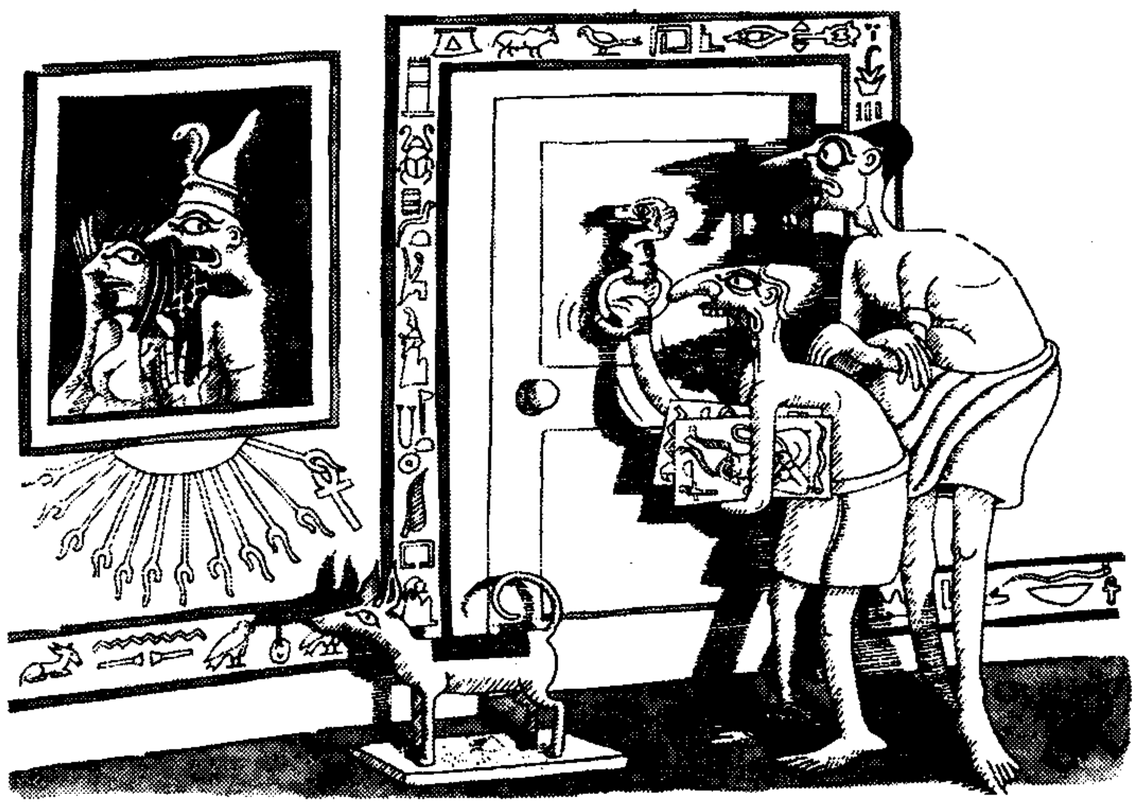
Distraught woman: It's Great Ormond Street! It's fine!

1st Man in Suit: I'll be there in a minute...unlike the hospital!

(All laugh. Theme music and credits)

NEXT WEEK: A Junior Accountant falls asleep after working all night on the carpeting budget. He has endangered profits — should he be sacked?

Star rating: NIL



"Damn! It's the Osiris's Witnesses"

'FEWER TRAINS WILL MEAN BETTER SERVICE' says Government

by Our Privatisation Staff
N.M. Rothschild

THE Transport Minister Mr Brian Morelooney yesterday explained how rail privatisation *would bring* a vastly improved service for Britain's rail customers.

He announced that the new franchise holders would have to run a minimum number of trains.

"In some cases this number could even be as high as one train per day," he claimed.

Great Train Robbery

"By concentrating on providing the best possible service once a day," Mr Morelooney explained, "it will be possible for the operators to ensure that every train is entirely full.

"Also," he went on, "safety would be greatly improved, since there will be no risk of collision when there are no other trains competing for trackspace.

"Passengers sitting on the roof or clinging to the sides will be issued with special safety instructions to ensure that when the train is approaching a tunnel they jump off and continue their journey on foot."

Just The Ticket

Another increase in efficiency will be the reduction of core ticket sales outlets from the present 3,000 to just one, based in Aberdeen Parkway.

Customers who wish to buy through-tickets to any station on the new privatised network will be able to drive to pick up their ticket in no more than eight hours.

Said Mr Morelooney: "All this will result in a leaner and more non-existent rail service. The benefits will be obvious. Train strikes will be a thing of the past — as will the trains."

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

NOTEBOOK

VICTORIA COREN

WELL I never. A vicar on *Blind Date*! Whatever will they think of next?

Probably a vicar on *Blind Date*!

☐ MY flatmate at college used to have an Athena poster up on her wall.

And now Athena have gone bust.

Blimey!

☐ OOH-AAH Cantona. He's just amazing, right?

And anyone who says he isn't must be mad.

It's like when your parents tell you off for smoking in your bedroom.

What are we meant to do, for God's sake?

Play football?

☐ I HAD to wait half an hour for the bus today. And then, would you believe it, three came along at once.

Have you noticed how often that happens?

When I told my Dad, he said: "I could make a column out of that."

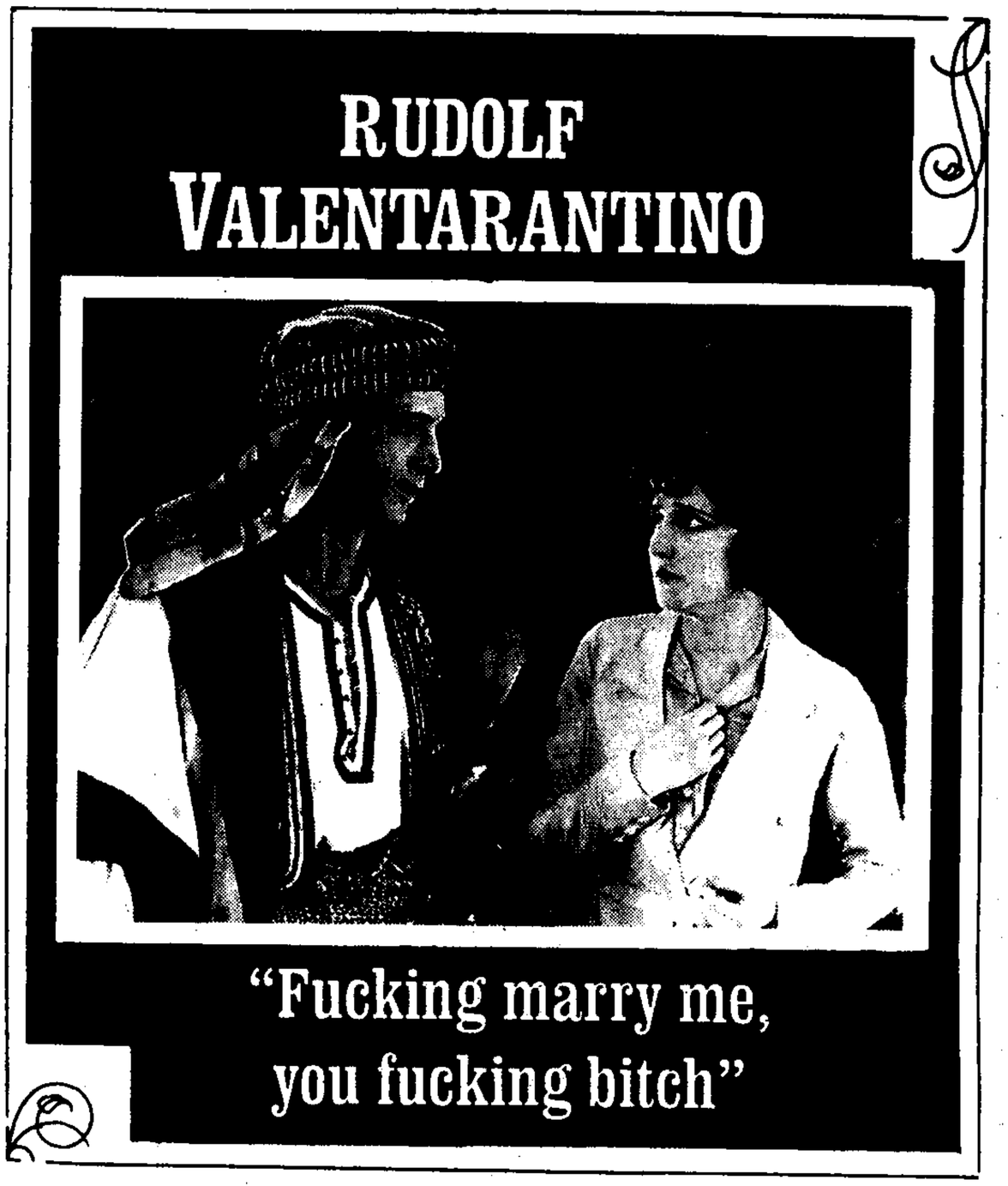
So I did!

Whatever next? A vicar on *Blind Date*?

ON OTHER PAGES

Should Nigella Lawson be smacked for writing self-righteous rubbish about child care in The Times? asks everybody.

"Alright — I'll do another bloody mammoth"



"Mum, Dad... I'm a homo sapien"

DIARY

CRIMEWATCH UK

Nick Ross: Imagine, if you will, a leafy suburb with dappled trees, level footpaths and the sun glinting on freshly-installed high-security systems. The kind of place, you might think, where violence was a stranger, where seemingly motiveless crazed knife attacks occur only very rarely.

And that's precisely what reputable estate agent Ian Marks was thinking when he woke up in his own hard-won Wokingham maisonette at 7.30 in the morning ready for another hard day's work:

(Alarm clock rings)

Reputable Estate Agent Ian Marks: Gosh, it's 7.30 in my Wokingham maisonette. Great. Not a single seemingly motiveless crazed knife attack during the night. But then, they do occur only rarely. I must be getting to work now. Bye love. See you tonight without so much as a scratch on my body.

Nick Ross: But that was where he was wrong. By the time the evening had arrived, reputable estate agent Ian Marks had been declared dead, the victim of that very same seemingly motiveless crazed knife attack that he had least expected. To Detective Inspector Bert Snipes of the Berkshire CID, the crime had all the classic hallmarks of a seemingly motiveless crazed knife attack of the type most of us least expect.

D.I Snipes: Good morning, Sergeant, this body has very many knife wounds in it. In my experience this suggests to me that the victim has been killed by a knife.

Sergeant: Right, Detective Inspector. Do you think the knife was acting alone, or could someone have been holding it?

D.I Snipes: I think you may be on to something, Sergeant. At this stage, we certainly must not rule out the possibility that the knife was not acting alone.

Nick Ross: Detective Inspector, what sort of a man are we looking for here?

D.I Snipes: At a guess, I'd say he was the sort of man capable of carrying out a seemingly motiveless crazed knife attack.

Nick Ross: Any clues to his appearance?

D.I. Snipes: Yes, we have some excellent clues. We believe that we could well be on the lookout for a youth or a middle-aged man, maybe someone getting on in years, and that he or she must have had at least one hand with which to perpetrate this vicious crime. We also reckon he or she may have been the kind of person who had access to a knife.

Nick Ross: So, someone with his or her own kitchen, perhaps or access to someone else's?

D.I Snipes: Correct.

Nick Ross: And I'm told that calls identifying a number of one-or-two-handed men and women somewhere between the ages of 12 and 82 with ready access to kitchens are already coming in, so that's exciting news there. Sue?

Sue Cook: Most of us will, at one time or another, have been gagged, raped and hacked to death. But statistics suggest that this unpleasant combination will occur only once during the lifetime of the average person, so there's no reason to be scared, unless, of course, it's you who's going to be next. So, please, don't worry your little heads.

For professional woman Liz Lockhead the dream of appearing on television was to turn to nightmare when a photograph of her dismembered corpse was featured on the 9 o'clock news last April. This was a particularly brutal murder, in sharp contrast to some of the more gentle and caring murders we have featured in the past. Police are looking for an extremely badly-drawn man with two eyes and what looks a bit like a face. Nick?

Nick Ross: Nasty stuff there, but, please, cheer up: at least the victim wasn't you — not this time at any rate!

We now turn to a particularly gruesome crime, really disgusting, so do please keep watching. It occurred in London's West End, where for centuries ordinary decent Londoners have come to do their shopping and take in a show, going about their business in a perfectly orderly middle-class fashion. But it was just one such ordinary decent shopper who was to find that his trip of a lifetime was to turn into the trip of a deathtime...

Ordinary decent shopper: Hmmm... this is a lovely fridge-freezer. I am at present considering its purchase.

Masked gunman: Take this, you much-loved family man!

Nick Ross: Seconds later, this much-loved family man was to wake up to find himself dead in a pool of blood. The stains on the carpet ensured that the store itself was left with a ruinously expensive bill running to many tens of pounds — no small amount in a time of recession, making this, as I said, a particularly thoughtless murder. Detective Constable Jacqui Hames, a man was spotted standing over the body with a sawn-off shotgun — could that be significant?

DC Jacqui Hames: Well, Nick, it —

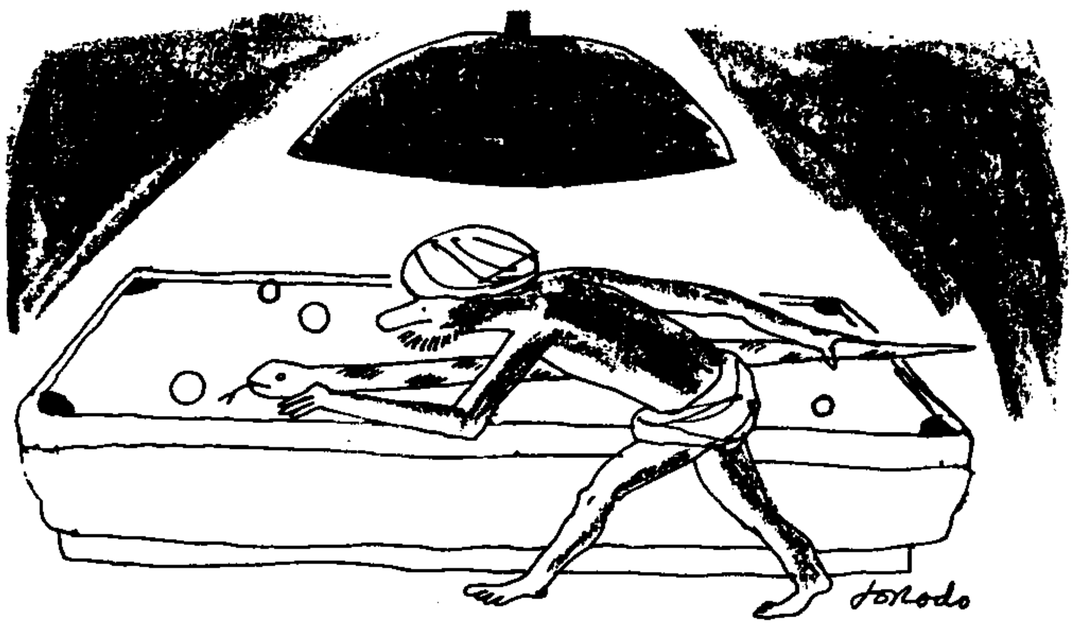
Nick Ross: Thank you, Detective Constable Jacqui Hames, I'm Nick Ross. We now turn to a particularly savage crime, involving a hand-held camera, three men in balaclavas, an old lady lying on the floor in tears, a director desperate to work on *The Bill*, seven out-of-work actors and eight good long chunks of gratuitious violence, Superintendent Hatcher, tell me, when did this particularly unpleasant assault on a senior citizen occur?

Supt. Hatcher: During studio hours, with some outside location work plus full catering facilities.

Nick Ross: I understand that the incident itself has not yet actually occurred, and that this was simply a reconstruction of a crime we would like to see take place with some urgency, now that we have cast it and worked out the necessary camera angles and so forth?

Supt. Hatcher: That is correct, Nick. We would ask anyone wishing to be involved in a fast-moving and dramatic crime such as this to contact us on the incident desk as soon as they have perpetrated it.

Nick Ross: We'll be waiting for your call. And remember — violent crime is much rarer than people tend to think, but we're not going to let that worry us, are we? And whatever happens — don't have nightmares. Do sleep well, despite the axeman lurking in the spare bedroom.



GLOBAL CUTTINGS

The people, however, subscribed to the view of having capital punishment in, the constitution as one way of continuing murders in the country.

Daily Times, Malawi

PRIORITY ORDER FORM

Please send me *Live & Work In Australia – 20 Ways To Migrate To Australia* – by Ross Hutchinson

I understand that if I am not absolutely delighted I may return, undamaged, within 10 days for a full refund.

Daily Mirror

Literary Review

Morning, suit!

Free to Trade
Michael Ridpath
(Heinemann, £10)

THERE is just one surprising line in this formulaic thriller. It's more than surprising, in fact; it's astonishing, confounding, stupendous! It's a line you never thought you'd read — and yet it is integral to the book's appeal.

It appears quite near the end, so you need to know the content. Paul Murray, the hero and narrator, is a junior bond trader in a city investment firm. Straight as a die — if not straighter! — he has been dismissed from his job on a trumped-up charge of insider trading because the villain of the story suspects he is getting too close to uncovering his secrets.

With a few loyal friends, Paul concocts a scheme to expose the wrongdoer and get back all the money that has been stolen. To carry it out, he has to get back into his old firm, so he asks if he can serve out his notice in a menial capacity. His boss unwisely agrees and Paul goes back to the office.

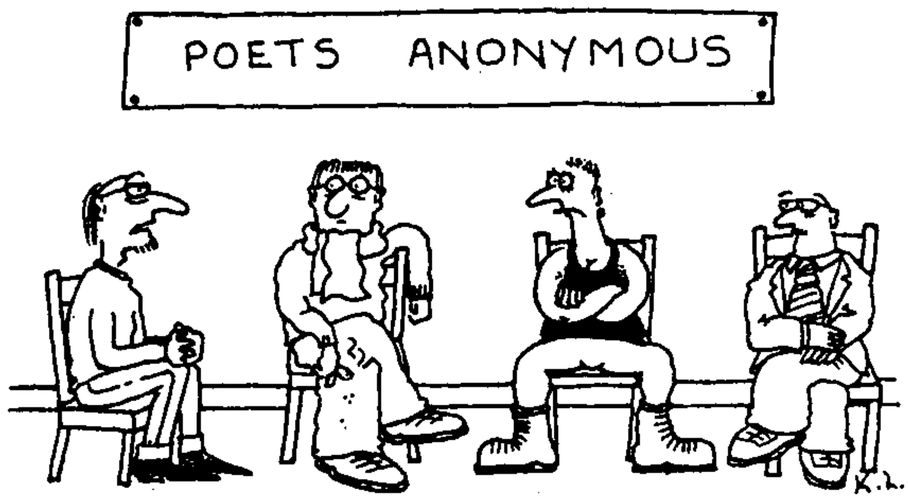
And so here it comes, the novel's climactic line: "It was good to be in a suit again." No, I'm afraid that's not a misprint. "*It was good to be in a suit again,*" the hero says. And he means it.

Free To Trade, you see, is the first great novel for suits. We have here a thriller not staffed by soldiers or spies, sex-gods or spacemen, but by suits. Every single character, apart from those in uniforms, is suited. And, goodness gracious, they're glad to be suits. Almost the only other work of comparable merit to explore this vast terrain is the cartoon strip Bristow.

Michael Ridpath — stop me if you've heard this before — works in the City himself and this is his first novel. He's not, you might say, a natural writer. He began the book, he has told a series of interviewers, because he bought a computer and then found he had nothing to use it for. So he got himself some manuals on how to write a novel and off he went. (These duffer's guides have now been reissued in one volume as *How To Write A Million* with a commendatory foreword by Ridpath, their star pupil: "I spent several weeks worrying over character and plot, and practical tips eked from the pages of my two Writer's Workshop books were invaluable," he says loyally.)

The result was astutely taken up by the agent Carole Blake and auctioned off for £250,000 here, and large amounts elsewhere, adding up to more than £750,000 in total, thanks to bovine publishers questing in great herds for the next John Grisham. Now Ridpath's improbable success has itself become the main promotional tool for the book. After all, newspapers — or, more to the point, journalists — are always suckers for stories about people who have made a quick fortune from a bestseller.

Ridpath himself, presumably already earning a little bit more than most hacks, doesn't seem quite so impressed. "The money's not really that much, it's spread over three years and one has to leave a slice for the agent and the taxman," he told a wounded reporter from the *Independent* (where many staff are now paid in tokens valid only within their Canary Wharf compound, an idea cleverly copied by MGN from the plantations).



"My name's Anon, and I'm a poet"

Ridpath's not even going to give up his real job. "It's important to keep in touch with the real world from which I draw my inspiration," he has said. So he's hanging in there on the coalface of suiting. "Two days a week he works as a consultant for Saudi International because he likes it but on the other three days he puts on a suit and goes to an office he rents in the City. There he fiddles around with a set of cards in a box on which he has plotted each scene," the *Telegraph* has reported, puffing its serialisation, delighted to find a writer it can understand at last.

So the book's not only about suits, and written for suits, but was produced by Ridpath in suits. As the reader can readily tell. The sole point of interest here is the financial setting. The prose is flat and the plot transparent: it's obvious who the villain must be after a few chapters. To call the characters cardboard would be an insult to cardboard, that useful substance.

The hero's a wonderboy, the villains psychotic and the women ludicrous: "God, she was sexy! She perched, cross-legged on her chair, her tight black skirt riding over her well-shaped thighs. Her white blouse was tucked firmly into her skirt, stretching over the curves of her breasts, as she leaned forward to make a point. Her lips were full and pouted frequently as she talked. The French language was made for lips like hers, I reflected." Had enough? No? Oh well, "her body was round and firm, almost muscular" too. And that's your lot. It's pitiful.

Never mind. With so much invested, the publishers had to make the book work. So Heinemann has spent £100,000 on advertising the thing, pitched the price low at £10 and offered a refund to any purchaser disappointed by it. As a result, *Free To Trade* is already at the top of the bestseller lists. There are so many suits out there and so few of them have ever tried to read a book before — let alone write one... in a commuter train, now, opposite you...

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ *BOOKWORM confidently predicts that next year's top best-seller is already a foregone conclusion. For Nigel Pratt-Dumpster, the Daily Mail's elderly diarist, is to suffer yet further humiliation at the hands of his former assistant Kate Sissons — this time in literary form.*

Sissons initiated legal proceedings against the Mail for constructive dismissal last year and obtained a £12,000 settlement. Dumpster's offences had included referring to her constantly in her presence as "the cunt" and flinging a copy of Who's Who in her direction.

Now she has drawn on her experience of working with Dumpster to cowrite a blockbuster with bibulous Evening Standard crime correspondent Gervaise Webb. They have already obtained a substantial advance through the good offices of fledgeling literary agent Georgina Capel. The title of the book, appropriately, is Sleaze; and the references to racehorses might repay attention.

'Bookworm'

LUVVIES

Working for Attenborough, he says, "was like acting inside a hug".

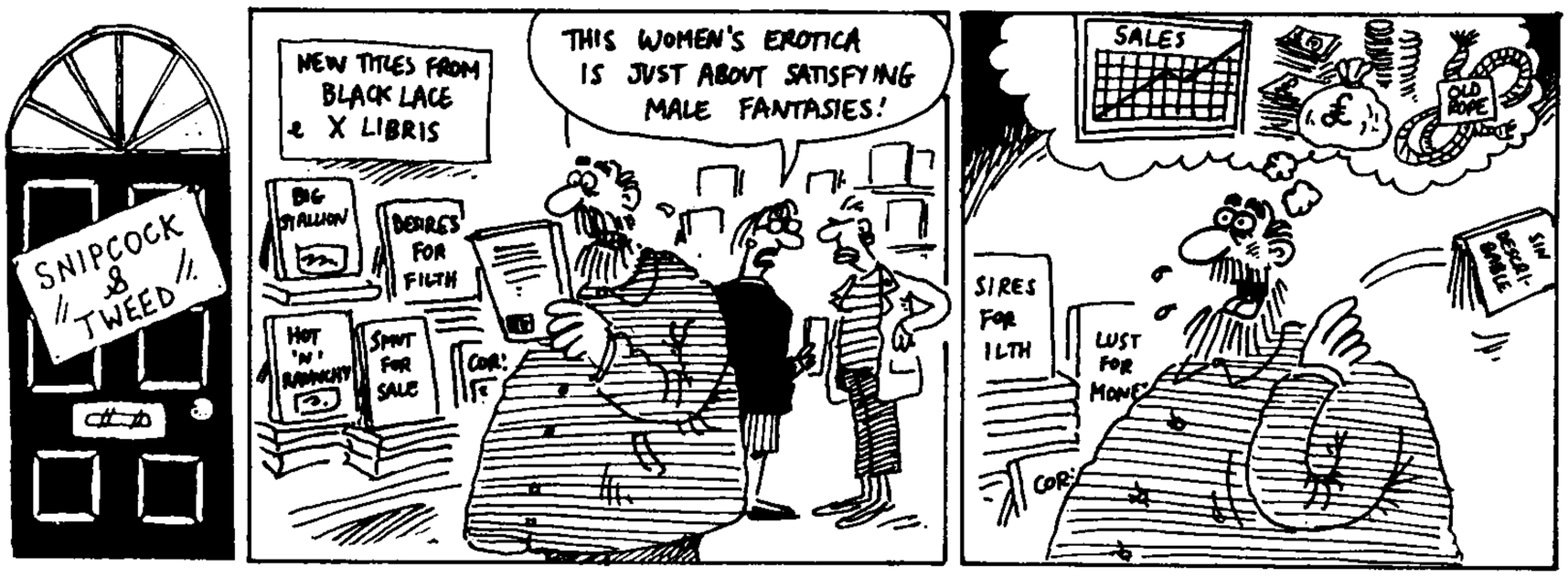
Actor JAMES FRAIN on 'Shadowlands' Harpers & Queen

"It's not that Kenneth is like Henry V. Henry V is like Kenneth."

JOHN SESSIONS on Kenneth Branagh The Big Issue

Contributors: Kathryn Fulton, S. Wildman.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.



footnotes

THE NOLAN SISSIES

ANYONE who imagines the Nolan Commission on Sleaze in Public Life is a "second Scott" should read the evidence given by the Rt Hon John MacGregor MP. He served eight years in the Tory cabinet before being sacked and sloping off to spend more time in the boardroom of Hill Samuel merchant bank.

MacGregor was summoned to Nolan on 24 January to answer questions about the successful lobbying for Ebbsfleet as a terminal for the Channel tunnel rail link. MacGregor, who opted for Ebbsfleet when he was transport secretary, declared that the decision was taken "entirely on merit" and that Decision Makers, the lobbyists for Blue Circle (who stood to make tens of millions of pounds out of the Ebbsfleet terminal) and just happened to employ a former Tory minister and a clutch of Tory MPs, "had no influence on the result; their work added nothing".

Questions at the Nolan commission are asked not by a professional barrister in command of all the facts (as at the Scott inquiry) but by "great and good" members of the commission themselves.

The main questioning of MacGregor was left to Diana Warwick, former general secretary of the university teachers' union. Warwick referred to a report in the London *Evening Standard* in which "you yourself were said to have a private meeting and briefing" with the lobbyists Decision Makers "and your special adviser was a key target for the campaign".

MacGregor admitted meeting Maureen Tomison of Decision Makers, but insisted "everything was done absolutely properly". He did not answer the point about the "targeting" of his special adviser — former Tory candidate Eleanor Laing, who now has a good job at the Institute of Directors.

Lord Thomson of Monifieth asked MacGregor: "You had a case of rather extreme lobbying firm hype and then a rather extreme form of media hype and in the meantime the real decision was taken on its merits?" Unable to disguise his gratitude, MacGregor replied: "Oh, absolutely".

EASY ON THE SLEAZY: The Nolan Commission

Even more intense grovelling followed from another commission member, MacGregor's former cabinet colleague Tom King. When MacGregor demurely suggested that because he had once been employed by Hill Samuel he was nervous of any government post connected with the City, King disagreed: "I will embarrass you now by saying that I always thought you ought to have been chancellor of the exchequer," he drooled, asking why a man shouldn't be chancellor just because he'd worked for Hill Samuel.

When MacGregor said Hill Samuel had been appointed as adviser to only "one particular operation"(the Channel tunnel) at the department of transport while he was in charge there, no one pointed out that Hill Samuel was also appointed adviser to the Vendor Unit of British Rail which deals with all the freight, leasing and infrastructure companies not franchised — a huge operation; nor that the appointment must have been approved by the then secretary of state for transport, a Mr John MacGregor.

No one asked MacGregor about his amazing appointments at Railtrack — his old college chum Bob Horton as chairman, and his "privatisation advisor" Sir Christopher Foster deputy chairman. And no one asked him about his pension.

Before the session, Brian Wilson, Labour's spokesman on trade and industry, wrote to Nolan about MacGregor's pension arrangements. It had been reported that Hill Samuel had gone on paying contributions to MacGregor's pension throughout his ministerial career. Wilson had raised the question of MacGregor's Hill Samuel pension with the prime minister last year, but Major refused to confirm or deny that MacGregor's pension was paid while he was a minister.

Here at last was a chance to settle the matter and to raise the general question of conflict of interest where a minister's pension is being funded by powerful companies. Yet none of the Nolan commissioners — not Diana Warwick, not Labour MP Peter Shore nor former Labour MP Lord Thomson of Monifieth — dared even to raise the matter.

"Ministers have very little indeed when they are suddenly ousted from office," sobbed MacGregor. "In fact many of them face a big drop in salary immediately. If you make the restrictions on what you can do after you cease being a minister very severe, you will discourage a lot of good people from becoming ministers."

One "good person" who was not discouraged by such penury was John MacGregor. Hill Samuel is not the only boardroom which has welcomed the chubby former secretary of state with open wallet. As the *Eye* disclosed last month MacGregor joined the board of Associated British Foods, where his experience as agriculture minister will no doubt come in useful. And on 9 January, a fortnight before his appearance before Nolan, MacGregor sidled on to the board of Slough Estates (chairman Sir Nigel Mobbs, a leading fund raiser for Tory party. Mobbs also advises the government on deregulation).

How much does MacGregor get from Hill Samuel, ABF and Slough Estates? What use will be made on those boardrooms of his ministerial experience? Is his appointment at Slough Estates yet another example of sleazy tit for tat? Not one of the Nolan snivellers dared to ask...

British Gas

BROWN-NOSERS

■ EVEN Cedric Brown, the British Gas (BG) chairman, came away unscathed from the "grilling" he received at the Commons employment select committee over his grotesque £205,000 pay increase.

Brown maintained that if you take into account the pensionable bonus of his old salary, this wasn't a 75 percent increase at all, as it seemed, but only a 28 percent increase.

For this to be true Brown had to earn a bonus of £103,750 under the company's performance management scheme in 1994. But this figure isn't published yet — so the 28 per cent claim couldn't be checked.

The truth is that the 75 percent figure is an understatement. Brown's pay rise was surreptitiously backdated to the beginning of 1994, adding another £90,000 to his package. And details of the latest share option scheme which will almost certainly enrich Brown still further won't be announced until later in the year.

Brown also claimed that he wished the increase had been announced right away to avoid nasty publicity. In fact British Gas's huge PR department was "working on" the increase long before it was published. Its biggest success was at the *Sunday Times* where deputy business editor Andrew Lorenz could hardly contain his admiration for the new directors' pay plans.

"The British gas initiative," he wrote, "is the most radical attempt yet to reconcile the interests of well-paid executives and anxious shareholders. Little short of revolutionary in its level of disclosure and its slaughter of sacred cows such as automatic bonuses and share options British Gas has thrown down the gauntlet to its peers."

P.S. CEDRIC BROWN is a keen member of the government's advisory committee on Business in the Environment, which encourages firms to "publish relevant information on their environmental performance". Friends of the Earth recently asked British Gas for information about more than 1,000 sites contaminated by past gas production. British Gas refused.

An Inspector Falls

ANYONE who falls foul of the Essex police can only hope they will be treated better than was former detective inspector Richard Harris.

Mr Harris joined the force in 1966. By 1989 he had served 23 years, was a respected officer on regional crime squad number five, and was waiting for an interview for promotion. Suddenly he was suspended. The chief constable had had an anonymous letter alleging that Mr Harris had been fiddling his expenses. The allegations were looked into by a team which included one of Mr Harris's rivals for promotion.

RICHARD HARRIS WITH WIFE PAM AND DAUGHTER COLLETTE

Mr Harris was committed for trial by Chelmsford magistrates on 17 charges of deception and false accounting. To prepare his defence he investigated the diaries, car logs and duty rosters of his fellow 22 officers on the regional crime squad. After three weeks' lonely research, he was not surprised to discover that the records were littered with mistakes and discrepancies.

His case finally came to Middlesex crown court on 21 June 1992 — nearly three years after the arrival of the anonymous letter. Judge Albert Clark presided over the usual expensive line-up: two QCs, two junior barristers, two sets of solicitors. After five days of the prosecution case the jury sent a note to the judge complaining that they did not understand a word of it. Two days later, Mr Pendry Davy QC, for the prosecution, admitted that the total amount of money which he alleged was wrongly charged to the police by Mr Harris had come down from £2,000 to £229. This sum had to be set against more than £300 legitimate expenses which the police agreed had not been claimed by Mr Harris.

Mr Harris's defence team had a complete answer to the £229, and reams of papers about the other crime squad officers. For instance, on 21 March 1989, the diary of a DC Unwin showed that he had been out in vehicle 71. This seemed to conflict with the vehicle's log, which showed that DC Gray had travelled 361 miles in Essex on that day in that car — a specially remarkable feat since the duty roster for that day showed DC Gray to be on annual leave. These entries and many others like them were never fully aired in open court.

Judge Clark immediately accepted that there was no case for Mr Harris to answer. Muttering that the very worst that had happened was a few minor breaches of Essex police regulations, he dismissed the case and awarded the enormous costs against the prosecution.

Richard Harris, who had retired from the police on health grounds in 1990, was relieved but hardly satisfied. In November 1992 he made a formal complaint to Essex police. His reply was a letter from the deputy chief constable of Essex, Peter Simpson, saying that he could not make any complaint since he was a serving officer at the time of the events he was complaining about. He was told that the crown prosecution service had called for a transcript of the trial.

Mr Harris heard nothing for 15 months. Then a newly-appointed deputy chief constable Jim Dickinson wrote to say that he didn't think there was any point in getting a transcript to the CPS or in setting up a formal inquiry. When Mr Harris again complained, he was told — last November — that he could not do so because he was a serving officer at the time of the events complained of.

Mr Harris writes in desperation to the *Eye*. "All I want is an independent investigation... It seems to me that the Essex police have used every tactic possible to avoid the truth being aired."

The *Eye* asked Essex police five questions. Here they are, with the answers received:

● Why did the original inquiry team include Mr Harris's rival for promotion?

At the time of the inquiry there were more than 140 inspectors in Essex police any of which could have been seen as a rival for promotion to Mr Harris.

● What is the estimated cost of the inquiry and the prosecution?

The inquiry and the prosecution were not costed at the time as this is not our usual practice.

● Has any police inquiry been held into Mr Harris's allegations and if so what was its conclusion?

The new deputy chief constable of Essex police has conducted a full review of the inquiry in the light of Mr Harris's concerns and has concluded that the inquiry was carried out in a fair and reasonable manner and with the full knowledge of the crown prosecution service.

● Have Essex police any comment on the view that Mr Harris was treated most shabbily and his career ruined as a result of the most trivial and unfounded allegations?

It is our view that Mr Harris was treated in exactly the way that any other officer would be treated when apparent irregularities emerged from an inquiry. We do not regard allegations of criminal conduct on the part of a police officer as trivial. The question of whether the charges are founded is a matter for the judge in the case, based on those facts which had been presented to him by the crown prosecution service.

● **If Essex police treat their own officers in the way they treated Mr Harris, what is the outlook for any member of the public who is investigated by Essex police?**

As we are confident that Mr Harris was treated fairly then it follows that any member of the public who was to be investigated by Essex police would be reassured by this knowledge.

THE THINGS THEY WRITE

"I had already made up my mind that he [Private Lee Clegg] was a thoroughly nice chap, but the fact that he gave me his last Rolo confirmed it."

Phillipa Kennedy, *Daily Express*, 1 February.

A NEW HAMILTON: Johnathan Evans

Privatised: the right to know

■ COMPANIES HOUSE provides the public with information about firms. The charges are low and the service is good. Obviously something drastic had to be done to change all that.

Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, called in a favourite consultant, SRU, which he trusted because its chairman, Henry Stevenson, despite falling turnover and profits, had just got a £160,000 rise bringing his pay to just under half a million pounds a year.

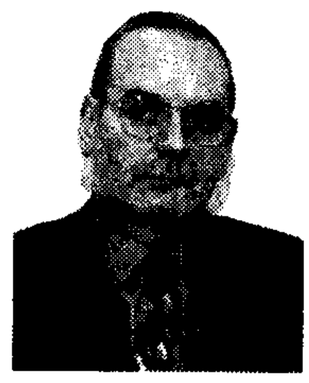
But even SRU could not deliver Companies House to the privatisers. After interviewing users and workers in London and Cardiff, they reported there was "no significant user demand" for privatisation. "The process of contracting out," the consultants went on, "would be expensive and complex. Companies House and its users would clearly prefer continuing improvement in the public sector."

Contracting out sections of the business — such as the London search room — "appears feasible, but unpopular. To proceed despite widespread opposition runs the risk that bids will not show gains commensurate with the cost and disruption of the exercise". Moreover, Companies House was very popular with its users, and there were "very strong concerns expressed" about the standards of service after contracting out. In particular, the independence of the information provided might be compromised if control passed to big private companies anxious to preserve confidentiality and secrecy.

Faced with this continuing attack on contracting out, Heseltine and his corporate affairs minister Jonathan Evans decided at once to contract out 30 per cent of Companies House with every intention of flogging off the lot before long.

The only cheers came from the contractors who see the chance of some more profit in sacking researchers, bumping up search fees, and cutting down on information to the public. The hopeful firms, the *Eye* can reveal, are EDS, Hays, Hoskyns, Serco, Hambros, IBM, British Telecom, ATT&T Istel and EOS — the usual bunch.

SEE SAW-YER

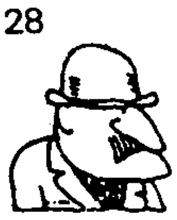


■ THERE is no more ardent supporter of Tony Blair's campaign to change Clause 4 than the new general secretary of the Labour Party, Tom Sawyer.

Here is the same Tom Sawyer in full flood in June 1993, addressing the annual conference of his trade union:

"I say to John Smith and all Labour politicians: stop arguing about the link with the unions. Attack the Tories! Don't give an inch! Don't give them a moment! Be on top all the time. Hammer away! That doesn't mean saying some silly things. Doesn't mean going down diversions or blind alleys. And I say to Jack Straw, that doesn't mean changing Clause 4."

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183



In the City

WHAT a series of amazing, unconnected and totally innocent coincidences dog Lord Archer and his involvement with the shares of Anglia Television where the fragrant Mary was a director.

First, his Kurdish friend Broosk Saib makes almost £80,000 from Archer buying 50,000 shares just ahead of the takeover bid from MAI. Now it emerges that another friend, stockbroker Karen Morgan Thomas, made £22,000 from another well-timed purchase of 10,000 shares. And if stock market sources are to be believed, there may even have been a third friend of the great storyteller who could have profitably dabbled in Anglia shares, possibly through a third party. No doubt again entirely by coincidence.

Morgan Thomas has gone to great legal lengths to deny that she bought as a result of any tip from Archer, whom she spoke to both before and after Christmas. Anglia directors were formally first informed of the bid approach a few days ahead of a board meeting on 5 January — the day after she dealt. Far from being given the good word by Archer — who as we all know Lady A never told about the bid — Morgan Thomas says she got the idea from reading the *Sunset Times* on 2 January. Furthermore, she dealt in her own name and with the knowledge of her then employer, James Capel.

Interestingly the great storyteller also claimed to have based his prescient share buying for Saib on newspaper speculation rather than on any inside information. And more interestingly still, the *Sunset Times* list of takeover tips also included Yorkshire Television, which in the initial version presented by the "friends of Lord Archer" to inquisitive hacks was said also to have been recommended to Saib. However, whether he or Archer ever bought any Yorkshire shares was never made clear. Morgan Thomas also did not disclose whether she also ignored not only Yorkshire from the *Sunset Times* list, but yet another small TV franchise holder, HTV. No bid emerged for Yorkshire TV or HTV.

It should also be made clear that — unlike the great storyteller — Morgan Thomas did not deal for "new time" and so had to pay the £43,000 plus costs for her Anglia shares. But then as a well paid employee of James Capel she could perhaps afford to do so rather more easily than Saib, whose cash resources appear to be of unknown if not uncertain nature, facing a possible demand for £250,000 had the shares not been sold within hours of the bid.

Still, it was all an innocent coincidence as far as Karen Morgan Thomas was concerned, and has justifiably raised no concerns with anyone other than those malicious souls who wish to suggest that garrulous, generous Jeffrey may have been indiscreet with inside information which he obtained by accident. A version of events which, as everyone now knows, the Department of Timidity and Inaction found not provable.

ONCE again it seems political consideration may save the Serious Farce Office from a much needed reorganisation. Just as at the last minute the review by treasury official John Graham pulled back from unequivocally recommending a merger with the crown prosecution service's (CPS) fraud investigation group, so it seems that the review of the Graham review by former cabinet office official Rex Davie has suddenly changed tack and voted against a CPS takeover.

Until a few weeks before the Davie report was handed over to attorney-general Sir Nicholas Lyell earlier this month, the firm betting was on the SFO being taken over by the CPS in a bid to answer mounting criticisms of failed or bungled fraud prosecutions. But then at the last minute the signals have changed. Instead it seems Davie has opted for a course — namely taking over the bigger FIG cases — which Graham completely rejected as a long term solution to the problems identified within the SFO. All this would do, declared Graham, was "solve the SFO's present difficulties of a falling caseload".

Lack of cases is indeed a problem FIG, with a nine times greater caseload, could solve. But one reason the CPS, especially in London, is handling so many large frauds is because Scotland Yard prefers to send cases to FIG where it is in charge of the investigation rather than to the SFO where investigation is dominated by lawyers and accountants.

While the suggested Davie option has been hailed by the SFO and its defenders as a victory, it could yet amount to an effective reverse takeover by FIG leaving the SFO intact but much changed within.

A CPS takeover always had the difficulty of the need for legislation in order to transfer "section two" interviewing powers to anyone other than the SFO. It would also have required substantial extra resources in both money and manpower. This may not have gone down well at the treasury.

Allowing the SFO to disappear within the CPS after only seven years would also have been an admission of failure by the Conservatives whose creation it was. It could also have been embarrassing with the Maxwell case due to start in April. The prospect of handing over the SFO to a CPS headed by Barbara Mills, the director of public prosecutions, at a time when her role in the Guinness case is under question may not have helped.

What was manifestly clear was that the SFO could not stay as it is. Even if its director George Staple amazingly believes that is "almost impossible to commit fraud". A gob-smacking verdict which cynics might suggest justified abolition of the SFO at a saving of more than £10 million a year.

The questions still to be addressed if the suggested Davie solution is accepted include which FIG cases are to be cherry picked by the SFO; how many FIG lawyers are to be injected into the SFO to run them; and what is to be done with the FIG cases that remain. It hardly makes financial sense to continue to have two authorities prosecuting fraud.

There is also the vexed issue of who is to be in charge of criminal prosecutions at an enlarged SFO. Staple, even before his remarkable "I see no fraud" gaffe to the *Mail on Sunday*, has amply demonstrated that he does not understand criminal cases. Hardly surprising as he had never prosecuted anyone when he took the job after a career in the City as a civil lawyer. The present senior assistant director Christopher Dickson has very bad relations with the City police and is not much better rated by the Metropolitan police who represent the main sources of cases. If an enlarged SFO it is to be then there may be a need to draft in an experienced criminal lawyer, perhaps from FIG, in a bid to prevent the seemingly endless tactical errors made by the generally low level talents on which the SFO relies.

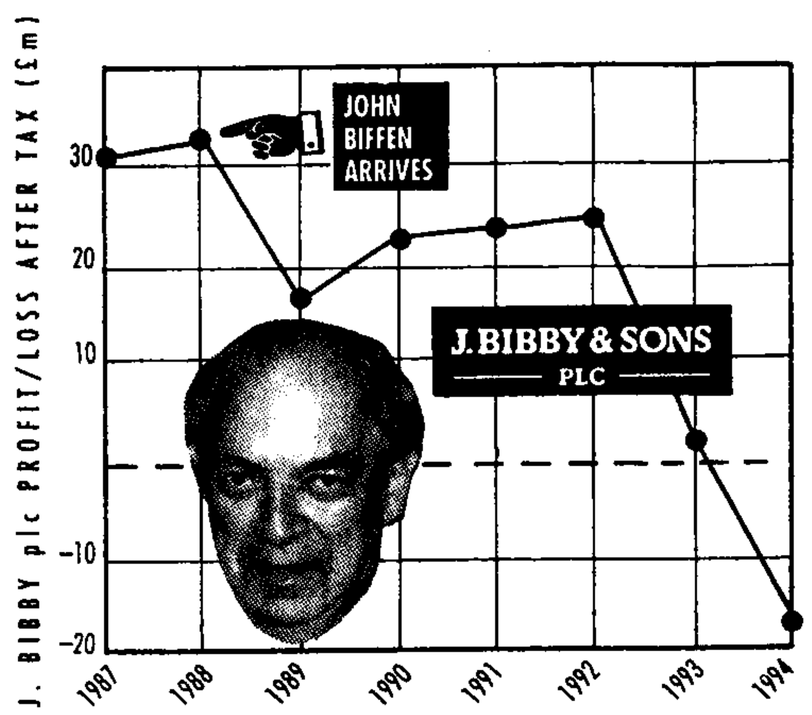
Then there is the equally contentious issue of relations with the police. Both the City and the Met have all but withdrawn from the SFO, preferring not to second officers and to keep cases to be prosecuted by FIG in order to ensure a bigger say. If the big FIG cases are to go to the SFO then there will need to be a great deal of bridge building, and quick. Restoring police confidence in the SFO may need a substantial injection of FIG lawyers or other non-SFO legal personnel who can prove they know how to get a result in court. More accountants and over-promoted lawyers will not change the win-loss numbers.

If the enlarged SFO option is accepted by the home office and the treasury it may be at the price of substantial changes inside Elm Street. After all, there still remain the substantial shadows cast by the return of Guinness to the court of appeal and the Maxwell trial. Further disasters soon after a new improved SFO had been launched would do little for confidence. So one change sooner or later could have to be the replacement of the affable but ineffective Staple by someone who at least sees there is a problem and might just have a solution.

THE denial by the phoney pharaoh Mohamed Fayed that he was the commercial client of Lord Lester QC who "has paid substantial sums and given indirect financial benefits" to four peers and several MPs to "ask questions and take other action on behalf of him and his company" will doubtless be confirmed by Lords Fanshawe and Bramall, who have been among Fayed's strongest supporters. Not that anyone who knows the former Tory MP Sir Anthony Royle and the former chief of the general defence staff would have considered such a suggestion anything other than preposterous.

'Slicker'

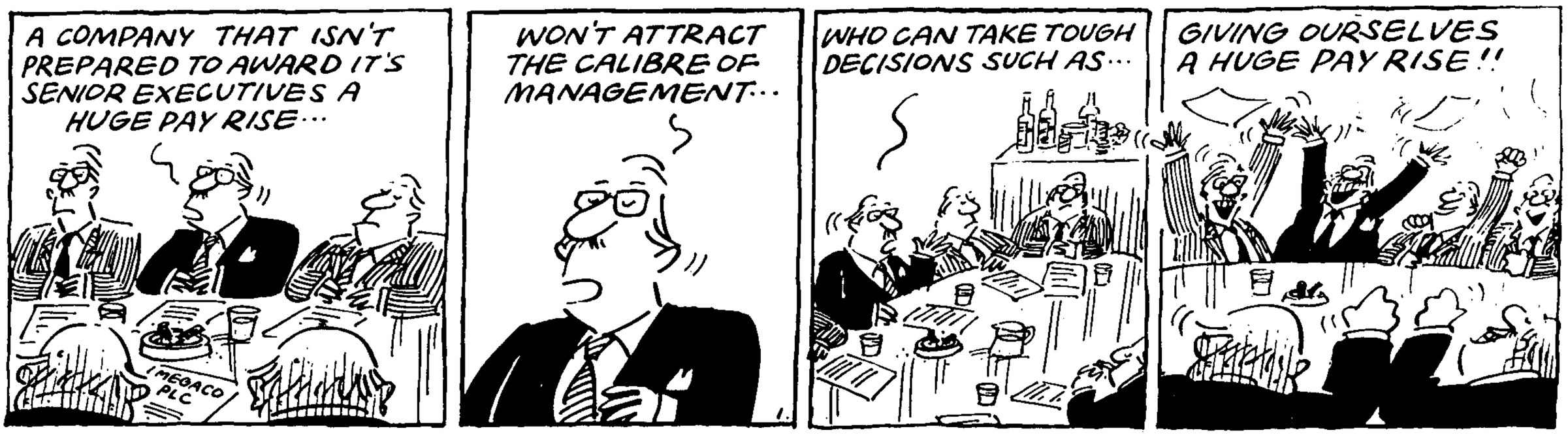
British Management Part 11.
RT HON JOHN BIFFEN, former Leader of the House of Commons and Lord Privy Seal, (semi-detached) MP for Shropshire North, Director J. Bibby & Sons plc (investment conglomerate) since 1988.



J. Bibby & Sons profit/loss after tax					
1987	£30.24m	1990	£23.04m	1993	£3.52m
1988	£33.39m	1991	£24.01m	1994	-£18.47m
1989	£17.07m	1992	£24.79m		

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE

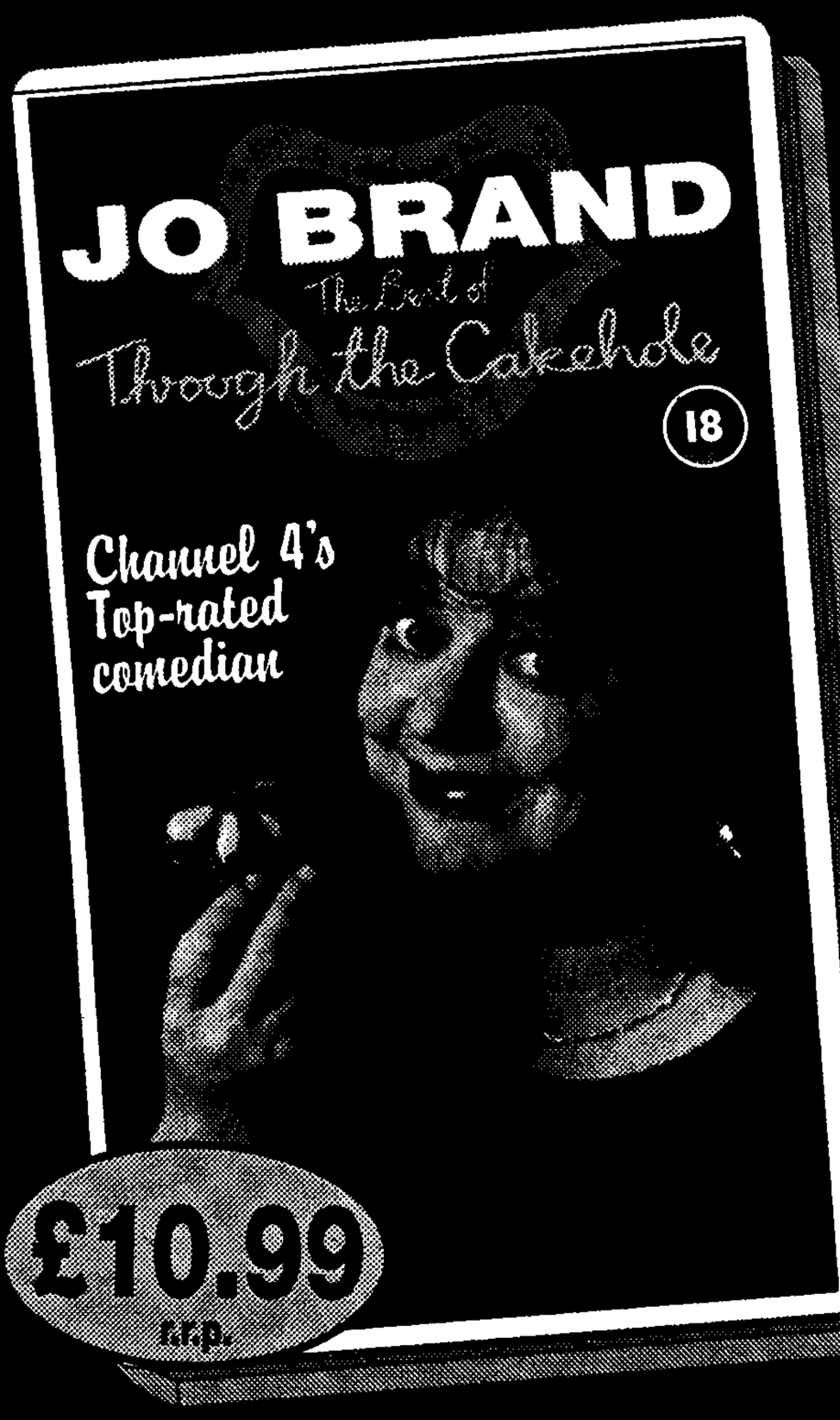

A COMPANY THAT ISN'T PREPARED TO AWARD IT'S SENIOR EXECUTIVES A HUGE PAY RISE...
MEGACO PLC
WON'T ATTRACT THE CALIBRE OF MANAGEMENT...
WHO CAN TAKE TOUGH DECISIONS SUCH AS...
GIVING OURSELVES A HUGE PAY RISE!!

JO BRAND

The Best of Through the Cakehole

18

IT'S STUFFED WITH THE FUNNIEST MOMENTS FROM HER TV SERIES



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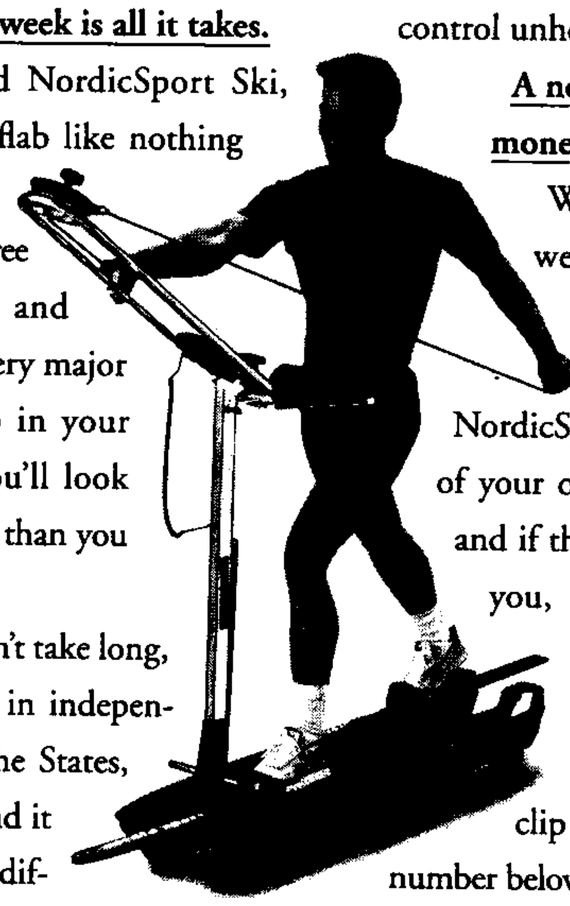

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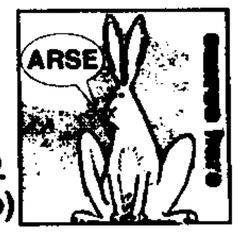

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QUOTE

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Jack Hughes, Independent on Sunday

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AMPLY DESIRABLE MAN (39, slim, many virtues — send for details!) seeks desirably ample woman. London/elsewhere. Box 5764.

EXPERT SWORDSMAN, 38, tall, dark, handsome, has a lot to offer, seeks elegant, attractive woman for adventures including swashing and buckling. Replies to Mr Flynn. Box 3464.

LOTTERY MILLIONAIRESS? Buy me a canal cruiser. Tall and cool, you can fly my kite. Devotion a guarantee. Box 5864.

MALE 1967 VERSION — don't have Porsche, Rolex, mansion, do have Volvo, Citizen, flat. All limbs own, teeth, hair. What self promotion? Seeks similar era adventurous fun lady. Box 5964.

GENTLEMAN DIRECTOR, divorced, more money than sense. Fed up of my toys — Porsche, blow-up pig etc. Needs pretty lady to spoil. Midlands/Manchester. Box 1865.

ENGAGING, UNORTHODOX, (insane?) farmer, 30, seeks spirited but tolerant E. Sussex/Kent woman for friendship/romance. Box 1965.

TALL SLIM WOMAN, 42, attractive, independent parent, seeks passionate, unattached, professional man for stimulating, fulfilling fun relationship. London/SE. Box 2065.

GINGER TOM, ninth life, but all parts intact, seeks female for daytime concatenation (existing owner keeps me in at night). Let's meet for some Whiskas. London. Box 2165.

MALE 27, successful, living in Netherlands, seeks female hedonist for interesting weekends. Photograph appreciated. Box 2265.

ARTISTIC MAN, 45 years, seeks desirable lady. Box 1265.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE, gentlemanly graduate 39 N/S WSOH seeks attractive lady with spark N/S 25-40 speaking Italian/French for uncomplicated trips to European gardens and architecture (and eat, drink and be merry!). Box 1365.

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FEMALE EARLY 30'S slim, tied, seeks male 35+ for discreet relationship. Photo appreciated. Midlands/anywhere. Box 1665.

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BRILLIANT BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, 22, deeply hurt, needs gentle warm sincere steady arms. London. Box 2665.

PATIENT MAN 33, waits for that pretty sceptic who's retained her virginity. Your timetable, my effort. Manchester. Box 2765.

YACHTLESS, FLAT-CHESTED, unpretentious man, 30s, married but recuperated, wants fun, sexy, discreet woman. Yorks. Box 2865.

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ADVENTUROUS MALE seeks female skiing partner. Box 6264.

TALL HUMOROUS GENT, 41, seeks lovely lady. Photo appreciated. London/E.Anglia. Can relocate. Box 2965.

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SUCCESSFUL MALE 44 enjoys travel, countryside, food, sex. Seeks romantic, intelligent, compatible lady. Any age or status. Box 3465.

ATTRACTIVE SLIM FEMALE seeks discreet young man for daytime diversions. Photo appreciated. Leicester. Box 3565.

AMUSING, CONSIDERATE male, 41, needs bright, curvy lady to share uncomplicated relationship. South/Southwest. Box 3665.

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❤ VALENTINE MESSAGES ❤
PRIVATE EYE — 1995

❤ GOUDHURST GIRL bought for a shilling — I love you.

❤ PUSSY PIE — What's in the oven tonight. BPK.

❤ BLISSFUL BUGS — sending big love to Huckleberry — her Finned playmate. You rate 10 gold stars and a snog off David Hirst.

❤ REINDEER MEAT is the best! With love always from your NASU.

❤ CAROLINE, your favourite porktious person loves you loads and loads.

❤ NOT THE BIRMINGHAM ANORAK sends love and cuddles to the TAILOR MAKER.

❤ HEY YOU — LIVING THING — I love you — you big poo — B.

❤ BREAKFAST — I love you with all of my heart — BULLDOZER.

❤ TO THE SUBLIME — The sunshine of your smile and the warmth of your eyes brightens up the dullest of days. You're wonderfully unique. Take care. From THE RIDICULOUS.

❤ HA! (this means, in Yorkshire dialect, that I love her, Lisa).

❤ ANDREW — they will have to change the constitution on the 3rd June. All my love.

❤ JILLY K. Don't miss the post!! Love MPW.

❤ BRUCE — Ich liebe dich. Yeah?

❤ TO T. I have spread my dreams under your feet; Tread softly, because you tread on my dreams. I remain yours forever. S.

❤ A.F.S.M: At last! You're taking me away from all this in your aeroplane of fire. R.D.P.

❤ TO MY SEVEN YEAR ITCH, from your Midlife Crisis. (PS — I love you).

❤ HARRY THE HAMSTER loves LIP SMACKIN' LONI.

❤ SARAH, tut, tut again, it turns me on!

❤ ROCK — like you lots — so get polishing! love SAUSIFROTT.

❤ BEANNIE: ditto: Not a day goes by. BAGPUSS.

❤ J.P. — He makes I laugh. Love DOLLOPINA xxx.

❤ TO THE NHS in Dundee — happy Valentine, love BUCKET.

❤ GOOSE — You are the agaricus bisporus on my Italian dough-based dish.

❤ LADY OF THE LAND — let it be me — the ex-LUCKY LODGER.

❤ RATTY I LOVE YOU from the CHOCOLATE TOAD.

❤ THIRSTY FOR LOVE? For tea two are better by half.

❤ JOLIPANTS, there could be a prod shower if you don't 42 me soon.

❤ MRS BEAR — MR BEAR loves you now and forever.

❤ FAULTIER ETHEL — Alles Schmushafte und Kuschelige wünscht dir dein Pastinäkelchen (auch Schildkrötchen, Eisbärchen und Schnüffelchen).

❤ DEBBY BAMBOO adores DUNCAN.

❤ RRRRRRRRRRascal! — Be my Valentine!

❤ GX20-0406:
MR 14,2537 (R6,R12)
STD R14,1253 (R6,R14)
STH R14,1764 (R6,R13)
A R4,1689 (R13, R8)
OI 1629 (R9),132

❤ LIZ you have the most beautiful smiling face with eyes that sparkle like fresh morning dew catching the first rays of sun under a cloudless blue sky.

❤ TIGGER: together forever? AMLA — MRS TIGGER.

❤ A-M — This could lead to matrimony, try 22.2.95! I'll be there. Of course!

❤ POPPY, miss the love violence! KITTEN.

❤ DARLING J. CHANG, I'll go Dutch on a 7th Parisian bubbly!

❤ TURTLE — beware the member in the shower pan.

❤ TO F. Nightingale of Ealing. You brighten my days. I love you dearly, youR dazzled DOTTY FRIEND.

❤ ROB COUMBE — I love you, always — HELEN.

❤ RATHEAD, luv U now and forever — DOG FOX.

❤ TOYIN — love you "dillions" — MICHELLE x.

❤ MOUSE IN MY EAR "wears my knickers", with lust as always, your ORIENTAL SPICE.

❤ BADGER loves his Bear.

❤ FOR A SUPER SEXY little nurse IOANA, who I adore, with tonnes of love from your own FAT NORTHERN BASTARD xxxxx.

❤ DARLING SNUGGLEBUNNY — love you oodles and oodles — CUDDLEKINS.

❤ SCRUM — my love forever — PONG.

❤ BLOODY TIGHT Flahertie loves charming first, himself second.

❤ "FOUND BAD MAN here. Keeping him forever... maybe!"

❤ TIPPERARY MAN your price is above rubies xxxxx.

❤ MOOING COW, FURFY BEAR lubby you arr arr.

❤ NUM NUM NUM. Love THE TRUFFLE PIG.

❤ MONKY, be my Valentine, love MANGUS.

❤ STEVE MORRIS — I absolutely adore you. You sexy animal. Love and kisses and ting — your COOCHIE WOMAN.

❤ GEORGIE — all my love my little water baby.

❤ JAMES COOK — love you, need you, my dear other half. MRS COOK.

❤ CAPITAINE — being near you feels like Christmas. I love you — SOUS-FIFRE.

❤ SQUEAKY — still here, two years on and I love you more than ever — MONKY.

❤ TO ROBBIE from a secret admirer.

❤ JULIA — I love you. NICK.

❤ ROLY-POLY LADY — still love you after all these years. R.

❤ BRUCE love you lots. STEPH.

❤ TO "VIDA" from "VIDA"

❤ GINGERNUTS — Happy Birthday — love you loads, JELLY-BELLY.

❤ NICK I love you. 42.

❤ BRILLIANT. Andrew and I are an item. BRA BABY M loves him.

❤ DEAR DARLING GORGEOUS SMELLY G, can't wait to scratch your sexy back once more. Love you and miss you, G.

❤ KITTEN SEEKS OLD TOM to be her valentine. See you at the other place.

❤ DEAREST DARLING WANKER I love you. KKKKATIE.

❤ PIG, love you, NUKE.

❤ BODY AND SOUL, SIR LANCELOT, xxx

❤ TO MY ONE AND ONLY Tiny Fluffy Kitten Fluffooze. I love your fluffy tail. With love from BEAR.

❤ AMY TURTLE — exchange your tea trolley for an Arabian knight and change your life for ever.

❤ TO MY TRESSED TEMPTRESS from the town on the Tawe, you've got two tigers now, grrr!

❤ AND YOUR MIND GETS DIRTY as you get closer to thirty. See you every day until 22/2/95 and every day after. Stay dirty.

❤ MURPHY — first love was cosy — although we do even better in unison.

❤ E — I do adore thee — I know thee what thou art — I serve thee with my heart and fall before thee — R.

❤ MIN — I love you lots — STAN.

❤ AARDVARK, yours for life — PUDDING xxx.

❤ MRS CHICKADEE — my gorgeous Jilly B. Be my Valentine Pippy — love CHRISSY.

❤ MUNDANE, Happy Hollidays! Love you alway, ¼.

❤ MAX SAYS NO to Shangri-La — that suggests fool's paradise. Love BLIGHT.

❤ BUXOM HORNY BITCH — are you ready for a good greasing? BHB.

❤ WINO — be my sex beast — EROTIC RODENT.

❤ JESSICA DE MELLOW — I love you — GEOFF.

❤ JFL — great steaming heaps of love — LOR.

❤ COLD FISH — I'm waiting patiently for snugglebum. I & K-B

❤ STEPHEN — part of me always — CONSTANCE.

❤ FOREVER IN LOVE with beautiful S Minky in Tartan Land. Kisses all over.

❤ MARTIN, cheeks and lines! DOLL.

❤ PESKY, all the cats in this house love you! A.C.H. ROXY, PUSKAS and BAGGIO.

❤ JAMES MARKO BARISIC and HAROLD I love you both. TUFTY SONYA.

❤ WITCHYPOO — may we forever ride the broomstick. O.S.S.

❤ HELLO HALLON, lots of love, S & W.

❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤

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I am seriously interested in meeting someone through Dateline.

2. Personal Information

Marital Status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒

Widowed ❒ Separated ❒

Religion: _____

Age: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Do you have children of your own?

Yes ❒ No ❒

If yes, how many live with you?_____

3. Your personal details

Height:_____

Build: slight ❒ medium ❒ large ❒

Hair colour:_____

Dress/Looks: casual ❒ fashionable ❒

elegant ❒ sporty ❒

PLEASE ENCLOSE 3 FIRST CLASS STAMPS

4. Your work

Present job:_____

Self-employed ❒ employed ❒

civil servant ❒ manual worker ❒

part-time ❒ not working ❒

unemployed ❒ in-training ❒

Schooling

O levels / GCSE's ❒ A levels ❒

Further Education ❒ Polytechnic ❒

University ❒ Business School ❒

Other:_____

5. Your Personality

❒ Warmhearted	❒ Fashionable
❒ Serious	❒ Practical
❒ Considerate	❒ Conventional
❒ Shy	❒ Reliable
❒ Romantic	❒ Adventurous

Here's Your Chance!

Simply complete this questionnaire and send it to us today! Or call us on:

071 938 1011

6. How would people who know you best describe you?

❒ always ready for a joke
❒ somewhat dreamy
❒ never has problems
❒ takes life a bit too seriously
❒ not easily upset
❒ always active
❒ chatty

7. Your interests

❒ Wining/Dining	❒ Jazz/Folk music
❒ Pubs	❒ Classical music
❒ Sports/Keep fit	❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Politics/History	❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading	❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling	❒ Drinking
❒ Science/Tech	❒ Children
❒ Cinema	❒ Homemaking
❒ Pets/Animals	❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music	❒ Countryside

8. Details of the partner you would like:

Minimum age:___ Maximum age: _____

Height: min. _____max.____Don't mind ❒

Children?

Yes, at home ❒ Yes, living elsewhere ❒

None ❒

Marital status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒

Widowed ❒ Separated ❒

Don't mind ❒

Dept. *PE 38*

Please answer the questions above, cut out this page and send it to us at Dateline 23 Abingdon Road, London W8 6AL *or call us now on 071 938 1011*

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Published by Pressdram Ltd, 6 Carlisle St, London W1V 5RG. 071-437 4017. Printed by East End Offset Ltd, Empson St, London E3 3LT. Distributed by P.E. Distribution, Mortimer Hse, 230/236 Lavender Hill, London SW11 1LE. 071-223 9971